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A HISTORY OF
CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

VOLUME I

EARLY AND EASTERN

A HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

BY
ARTHUR CUSHMAN McGIFFERT

VOLUME I Early and Eastern From Jesus to John of Damascus

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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TO
MY STUDENTS
1888-1926

PREFACE

This volume is the initial instalment of a work which was begun in response to the solicitation of some of my former students who after my retirement from Union expressed the hope that I would publish the course of lectures on the history of Christian thought which I had been in the habit of giving for many years. At first I was disinclined to undertake the task, but as strength began to return and the urge to work grew upon me I was attracted by the idea, not indeed of publishing the lectures, but of writing a general history of Christian thought that might prove of interest not only to students but to others as well. With this in mind the technical jargon of theologians has been avoided as far as possible and clarity and simplicity of statement have been aimed at throughout. Matters of interest only to specialists have been omitted and the discussion of the divergent views of other historians has been reduced to a minimum. I have not for a moment wished to sacrifice the interests of students to those of a wider public—my purpose has not been popularization—but I have tried to write instead of a textbook or an encyclopædia a history which may be read consecutively as all history should be. The work has been carefully documented. Those who desire to pursue any part of the subject further will find the references of value, and it is hoped that others will not be unduly distracted by them.

The present volume deals with the beginnings of Christian thought both in east and west and carries on the development in the east until the creative period came to a

PREFACE

close. A second volume, covering Christian thought in the west from Tertullian to Erasmus, is already in press and will appear shortly; and it is my hope in a later volume or volumes to bring the history down to recent times. For this a beginning has been made in my Protestant Thought before Kant and The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas.

This volume and the next have been written under difficulties, due partly to impaired health which has entailed many interruptions, partly to the lack of adequate library facilities. Having spent most of my life in immediate proximity to a great theological library, particularly rich in historical literature, I have found it no little handicap to work under other conditions. The handicap has been overcome so far as was possible by the help of Mr. D. H. Schroeder, assistant librarian at Union Theological Seminary, who has kept me supplied during all the time I have been preparing these volumes with the books I have most needed. He has aided me as well in connection with the Bibliography. For his unremitting kindness I owe him my hearty thanks.

My thanks are due also to my son, Professor A. C. McGiffert, Jr., of the Chicago Theological Seminary, who has read large parts of both volumes in manuscript and the whole of Volume I in proof, and whose questions and suggestions have been of the greatest assistance.

A. C. MCGIFFERT.

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BOOK ONE
CHRISTIAN THOUGHT UNTIL THE TIME OF
IRENÆUS

CHAPTER I

JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES

THE life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth were conditioned by the prevailing unrest that marked the Palestine of his day. Impatience of foreign control was widely felt and the spirit of nationalism was growing ever stronger and more bitter. One result was what might have been expected in any country similarly circumstanced, the outbreak from time to time of armed revolts put down by the authorities with a heavy hand. Another result peculiar to the Jews was the recrudescence and growing currency of the ancient hope of a golden age to come when the nation, not by its own efforts but by the interposition of God, should be set free from the dominion of the heathen and enjoy an era of peace, prosperity and glory. Then the God of Israel would reign supreme and righteousness be everywhere established. Sometimes the hope was nationalistic to the last degree and put in the forefront political independence and material well-being; sometimes it was of a more spiritual character and emphasized chiefly or exclusively the righteous rule of God and complete obedience to him.

In the generations just before and after Jesus the hope found eloquent expression in various apocalyptic writings which differed in many ways but were at one in their confident predictions of the coming of the new and better age. There were those to be sure who did not share this hope: some who were well content with things as they were and desired no divine intervention, others who would have

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welcomed it but saw no reason to expect it. But in spite of indifference and skepticism in many quarters the hope was very much alive in Jesus' day and did not a little to determine his career. He too shared it in its more spiritual form, and he not only looked forward to the new and better age but he was convinced that it was immediately at hand. Wherever he may have got this conviction, whether it came to him gradually as he studied the prophets and reflected upon the evils of the age, or was due to some external influence like the preaching of John the Baptist, at any rate it took such possession of him that he felt himself called upon by God to proclaim it publicly as John was doing and to carry the proclamation far and wide. John was content to remain in the desert and preach to the people that flocked thither. Jesus did not wait for them to come to him but went about among the towns and villages delivering his message wherever there were those to listen.

Unfortunately Jesus left no writings and we must depend for our knowledge of his teaching on the reports of his followers embodied, more or less revised and edited, in our three Synoptic Gospels. Though we cannot always be sure of his words as recorded in those gospels at second or even third and fourth hand, we can at least form a fairly accurate picture of his controlling interests and of the spirit and general principles of his teaching.

His message had two aspects: it was at once a promise and a warning. He proclaimed the gospel or good news of the speedy coming of the kingdom or reign of God, so longed for by many, and at the same time warned his hearers of the divine judgment which was to attend its coming, when some would be found worthy to share its blessings while others were condemned and cast out. He announced the approach of the kingdom not simply that men might hail it with rejoicing but that they might repent and amend their

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lives and thus be fitted for the righteous rule of God. Like John the Baptist he judged his generation rigorously and was profoundly convinced of the need of a reformation. He was especially severe upon the religious leaders of the day. Their hypocrisy, pride and arrogance he denounced in unsparing terms, and he condemned them also because in their ignorance of the true will of God they were deceiving the people and leading them astray. Blind leaders of the blind, they were hurrying both themselves and others to destruction.

Jesus left nothing undone to bring home to his hearers the seriousness of the impending crisis. He was not ascetic either in his living or in his teaching but he insisted that nothing else was of any consequence in comparison with the kingdom. Possessions, friends, family, all the ordinary responsibilities and obligations of life counted for naught in the face of the approaching consummation. He declared that unless one hated father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, one could not be his disciple, and to the man who wished to perform the filial duty of burying his father, he sternly replied, "Let the dead bury their dead." To take such utterances as representing his general attitude touching men's duties toward their fellows is of course to misunderstand them as his insistence on love for one's neighbor abundantly shows. They were meant rather to impress upon those whom he addressed the strenuousness and immediacy of the crisis.

It was for the same reason that he emphasized over and over again the sternness of the divine character. God, he insisted, the God whom they worshipped as well as he, was not a fond and indulgent parent, he was a strict judge who would take vengeance upon the wicked and exact the uttermost penalty from the unrighteous. Jesus of course believed

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as all Jews did that God is gracious and merciful as well as righteous. He took for granted that God could forgive not simply punish, and when he found the assurance of divine forgiveness needed he was quick to offer it. But he evidently felt that too many of his countrymen were presuming on God's goodness and that what they chiefly required was not the promise of forgiveness but the warning that they must not expect to be forgiven unless they too forgave, that they must not expect to be treated mercifully unless they too were merciful. It was not the preaching of divine forgiveness that seemed to him chiefly demanded in the circumstances but the preaching of divine judgment. To call his gospel the gospel of divine forgiveness as if forgiveness were his chief interest, or as if he made more of it than others, is to misinterpret him.¹

So too in the matter of the fatherhood of God which has often been represented as the heart of his gospel. Naturally he thought of God as a father as God was commonly thought of by the Jews of that day.² But there is no evidence that he went beyond his countrymen in emphasizing the divine fatherhood or that he interpreted it in a novel way. The word Father as used of God by the Jews implied his care of them and his goodness toward them, but also his sovereignty and supremacy and his right to do what he would with them. Jesus employed it indifferently in speaking of God's kindness, of his providential care, of his power and glory and authority, of his forgiving and refusing to forgive, and of his judging and punishing. In the circumstances his use of the word Father, whether it was his common name for God or not, taken by itself throws no light upon his inter-

¹ On this and the following paragraphs see my *God of the Early Christians*, chap. I.

² Cf. G. F. Moore, *Judaism*, Vol. II, pp. 202 ff.

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pretation of the divine character. To think of fatherhood in the modern sense of the word, or even in the sense of Paul and John, as the burden of Jesus' teaching is to think of him divorced from the real situation which he faced — a situation, as his words abundantly show, that made the preaching of righteousness and judgment the paramount need of the hour.

Jesus did not content himself with announcing the coming of the kingdom and summoning men to repentance; he spent much of his time in pointing out what they needed to repent of and what kind of righteousness it was that God demanded of them. In this connection it is worth noticing that he recognized virtue as a natural achievement, not a supernatural gift. He had an uncommonly high estimate of man's moral powers. In spite of all the wickedness he saw about him, and the disobedience to the divine will, he could summon his hearers to be perfect even as their Father in heaven was perfect without ever suggesting that divine aid was needed or that they would have to be made over by divine power if they were to measure up to such a standard. Of the pessimism so widely prevalent in the Hellenistic world, the pessimism that counted man wholly incapable of good without the influx of the divine, there is no trace in the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels as in Paul and John and other Christians both early and late. The significance of this fact, overlooked as it often is, can hardly be exaggerated.

Jesus' teaching was not formal and systematic. He made no attempt to cover the whole range of man's duty. He dealt with particular situations as they arose and there were many aspects of human life, as there were many sides of human character, which he had no occasion to touch upon. But in spite of the unsystematic and fragmentary nature of his teaching there stood out clearly enough certain

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general principles which, he insisted, must govern the lives of all that would have a part in the kingdom.

Fundamental was the duty resting upon every child of Israel to observe the law of God. Jesus believed as devoutly as any Jew ever did that the law of his fathers had God for its author and that its precepts represented the divine will and were binding on himself and on all the people. But he saw that the law was widely misunderstood and that many even of the most faithful in their zeal to observe its enactments were missing its real meaning and disobeying when they thought they were obeying it. Much of his teaching consequently was devoted to the reinterpretation of the law that his hearers might learn what it was that God actually required of them.

Two things are especially noticeable in his treatment of the law. In the first place he insisted that the keeping of the law involves the inner attitude as well as the outer act. The man who is angry with his brother breaks the law as truly as the murderer; and he who lusts after a woman as truly as he who commits adultery with her. Jesus always laid the emphasis on the inner man rather than the outer. The deed might be perfectly correct but it had worth in his eyes only if the motive that prompted it was what it should be. Only if the heart is right is the man himself right.

Again Jesus distinguished between what he regarded as the more important and the less important requirements of the law, putting justice and mercy and fidelity above the tithing of mint and anise and cummin, and making his own the sweeping words of Hosea, "I desire mercy not sacrifice." This does not mean, as is often thought, that Jesus put one's duty to one's fellows above one's duty to God; on the contrary the latter was always fundamental with him. It means only that many, particularly the Scribes and Phar-

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isees, the religious leaders of the day, were counting what they conceived to be their duty to God — the punctilious observance of all the niceties of the law — more important than their duty to their fellows and that this seemed to Jesus in the circumstances especially to need combating. If these same Scribes and Pharisees in their zeal for justice and charity and mercy had been forgetting God and neglecting his worship, Jesus would have condemned them in no less vigorous terms. His treatment of the merchants and money-changers in the temple throws light upon his attitude. The real ground of his quarrel with them was not that they were dishonest but that they were acting without proper reverence for God's holy place and so he drove them out.¹

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In these familiar commandments, the former from Deuteronomy and the latter from Leviticus, Jesus summed up the whole law — not to love God instead of neighbor, or neighbor instead of God, but to love them both. To trust God, to reverence and honor him, to be faithful to him, to be quick to do his will, to be merciful, kind and forgiving to others, enemies as well as friends, and to treat them always as one would wish to be treated — as Jesus viewed the matter there should be no conflict between these two sets of duties and there could be none for him who really loved both God and neighbor.

In his handling of the law Jesus remained a loyal Jew. He came, he declared, to fulfil the law and the prophets, not to destroy them, and there was nothing in his teaching to undermine his followers' respect for the law or to lead to its

¹ According to Mark he would not suffer that anyone should even carry a vessel through the temple.

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abolition. It is to be noticed that he took his principle of interpretation — love for God and neighbor — from the law itself not from some extraneous source. He had no thought of attacking the law or substituting human reason for divine authority. The law was to be obeyed because it came from God not because it appealed to man's conscience. But to know what it required it was necessary to read it in the light of his character who gave it. Jesus' humanizing of the law, as for instance his declaration that the Sabbath was made for man not man for the Sabbath, and the freedom and assurance with which he subordinated its less important to its more important provisions might offend the legalists and strict constructionists, but his attitude was not in the least un-Jewish or anti-Jewish. On the contrary there was abundant warrant for it in sound Jewish opinion.

As he did not break with the law of the Jews himself or teach his disciples to do so, Jesus did not break with the Jewish people. He taught his followers, it is true, that they should count as neighbors all that needed their help, whether Jews or Samaritans, and thus did what he could to undermine the traditional race-prejudice against outsiders and hatred for them. But he thought of the coming kingdom as a Jewish kingdom and his gospel as a gospel for the Jews. He was sent, so he declared, only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and he directed the Twelve to carry their message of the kingdom to them alone and not to Gentiles or Samaritans. Even though he may perhaps have contemplated the ultimate inclusion within the kingdom of others besides Jews there is no adequate reason to suppose that he thought of a Gentile mission, still less of a Gentile Christianity divorced from Judaism. The narrow Jewish attitude of many of his disciples after he was gone is therefore not to be wondered at.

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The expectation of the approaching kingdom or reign of God commonly though not always included the figure of a Messiah or anointed one, a king of David's line, who was to be God's agent in establishing the new order of things and was to reign as his representative on earth. This expectation of a coming Messiah was widely current in Jesus' day particularly among the common people. The important thing about it is that by his immediate disciples, or at any rate by many of them, he was himself believed to be the Messiah. Had it not been for this belief we should possibly never have heard of him.

The origin of the belief that Jesus was the Messiah is involved in obscurity. In the scene at Cæsarea Philippi recounted in Mark 8 and Matthew 16 Simon Peter is represented as responsible for it. Whether Jesus himself shared the belief or not, at any rate he declined for some time to let it be publicly proclaimed, and it was only when he appeared with his disciples at the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem that he was openly hailed as the expected deliverer. As he had himself anticipated, the result was his arrest and execution. Nothing else was possible in the circumstances. A developed Messianic movement must inevitably lead to uproar and rebellion and bring down upon the city the summary vengeance of the Romans. This the Jewish authorities must prevent at all hazards. Whatever Jesus' character and principles, whether he was a good man or a bad, an impostor or an innocent victim of circumstances, the only safe course was to remove him as a dangerous person. He was therefore arrested quietly at night and before the populace knew what was going on he was condemned to death by the Roman governor, who was ready enough to act in the matter when the situation was explained to him. The catastrophe served to convince the people of their error in imagining Jesus to be the Messiah and the authorities had

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reason to congratulate themselves on the ease with which the movement had been crushed before it attained serious proportions.

In the meantime, however, the belief in Jesus' Messiahship had become so firmly rooted in the minds of some of his followers that even his death failed to eradicate it. It is not difficult to account for the original belief. Jesus' commanding personality, so unlike that of the ordinary man, the authority with which he spoke, and the power he exhibited in his works of healing, could hardly fail to suggest at a time when the Messianic hope was so widely current that he was more than a mere preacher of the kingdom like John the Baptist, that he was indeed the promised Messiah. Whether he declared himself to be such or not, at any rate he spoke of no other Messiah to come as John had done. It was apparently not his teaching so much as his wonderful works that convinced many of his Messiahship. Compare, for instance, the words of Peter, "God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him." (Acts 10:38)

In the circumstances the extraordinary thing is not that his disciples believed him to be the Messiah, but that their belief was not extinguished, or at any rate not permanently extinguished by his death. Had he been thought of as a mere preacher or prophet his death, of course, would have made no real difficulty. But it was quite impossible that he should be the Messiah and die without assuming the royal dignity or ushering in the new age. The impossible was made possible by the conviction that he was not dead but had risen from the tomb. In itself the resurrection was meaningless, for Jesus disappeared almost immediately, but the resurrection of the Messiah followed by his ascension meant that he still lived and would in due time return from

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heaven to do Messiah's work. The belief in Jesus' Messiahship and the belief in his resurrection and ascension were mutually dependent. Without the former the latter could hardly have arisen, without the latter the former could certainly not have survived.

Though the death of Jesus was thus made good by his resurrection and ascension the question remained, Why did he die? Could he not have assumed the Messianic dignity at once without passing through the experience of death? His followers found the answer in the unpreparedness of the people of Israel, shown by their rejection of Jesus. His kingdom must wait until by repentance and recognition of his Messiahship Israel was ready for the establishment of God's righteous rule. Then the risen Jesus would return in glory from heaven and inaugurate the Messianic age.

This gave the disciples their mission and their opportunity. Until they had won the people and their rulers to faith in him Jesus could not return. They must therefore find their way at once to Jerusalem, the Jewish capital, there to await his coming and there to take up the task of convincing their countrymen that their leader was the promised deliverer. Whatever his own belief at any rate it is evident that Jesus did not make his Messiahship or that of anyone else the burden of his preaching; he was interested rather to prepare his countrymen for the reign of God by setting them right with God and with each other. To arouse them to the need of repentance and reformation in view of the approaching kingdom — this was his great aim as has been seen. "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand" was the heart of his message; theirs was summed up by Peter in the words, "God hath made this Jesus whom ye crucified both Lord and Christ." Jesus spent his time chiefly in inculcating the spirit and conduct demanded of subjects and children of God,

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their King and Father ; they spent theirs in presenting arguments to support their belief in Jesus as the Christ. The original emphasis was thus changed, and Jesus himself instead of his message was made the centre of the new faith. It is essential to recognize this change of emphasis if we would understand what followed.

The disciples went about their task with confidence and enthusiasm. They were so sure that Jesus was what they claimed that they expected speedily to accomplish their mission and convert the whole nation to faith in him. But their expectation was disappointed as it was doomed to be. That they could cherish it at all was proof of an extraordinary naïveté comprehensible only in men of little culture and knowledge of the world. Their conception of the Messiah, transformed by Jesus' death, was something quite unheard of. To be sure the picture of a man coming upon the clouds of heaven to judge the world was not new ; it is found both in Daniel and Enoch and must have been familiar to many of Jesus' contemporaries. But the belief that this man from heaven had already lived on earth, and the identification of him with the suffering servant of the later prophets to which the disciples were driven by the need of justifying their faith in a crucified Messiah, were wholly novel and put a strain upon the credulity of those who had been looking for a Messiah as well as of those who had not. More than that the person whom the disciples identified with this new and unfamiliar Messiah must seem, at any rate to the people of Jerusalem, the most unlikely figure for a position of such dignity. That he came from Galilee, contemptuously known in Jerusalem as the court of the Gentiles, and was of the humblest origin and upbringing might perhaps have been overlooked, as it apparently was by many of the Jewish populace before his crucifixion ; but now that he was dead the last possible ground for belief in him had vanished.

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The claim that he had risen again, on the face of it quite incredible to the aristocracy, made up largely of Sadducees who believed in no resurrection whatever, and almost equally so to those who accepted the resurrection only at the last day, was supported by nothing but the bare word of a company of ignorant strangers from Galilee. The leader whom they asserted they had seen alive after his crucifixion they could not produce; on the contrary they had to admit that he had left them almost immediately and they could explain his disappearance only as an ascension into heaven. The wonder is not that they failed to win the nation to their belief, but that they succeeded in winning anybody to it. Such success as they had is only one of many historic illustrations of the contagion of personal enthusiasm and devotion.

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As has been already said, in making Jesus' Messiahship the centre of their propaganda the disciples in Jerusalem shifted the emphasis and put into the forefront what with him was subordinate if not altogether lacking. Henceforth the right attitude toward God and one's fellows was not enough; there must be first of all and above all the right attitude toward Jesus. Only his disciples, only those who acknowledged his Messiahship and declared their faith in him, could hope to share in the blessings of the coming age. Thus the movement crystallized into a sect marked off from the rest of the people by its belief that Jesus was the Messiah and by its expectation of his speedy return.

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Though the early disciples may fairly be said to have constituted a new sect they must not be thought of as isolated from their fellow-countrymen. There is no sign that they formed a synagogue of their own, though they had a perfect right to do so, as had any group of not less than ten Jews. Apparently they were quite content to attend the same synagogues with their unconverted neighbors who were

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equally content to have them. For some time at any rate no serious rift appeared between them and their compatriots because of their belief.

It was not in any sense a new religion they were proclaiming any more than it was a new religion Jesus taught. Like him, they were devout and loyal Jews, as devout and loyal as the Pharisees themselves, and their belief in Jesus involved no change in the religion of their fathers. As they had always done and doubtless with increased zeal and devotion they continued to engage in the common religious exercises of their people. Their God was the God of Israel, their law was the Jewish law, and their Bible was the Jewish Bible.

There is no sign of any difference between their ideas of God and the ideas of their countrymen. They too worshipped the one and only God, creator and ruler of the world, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, who had chosen the Jews to be his peculiar people and whose righteous will was the law of their lives. Their conviction that Jesus had risen and ascended to heaven meant no break with the monotheism they had inherited. It was God, the God of their fathers, who had raised Jesus from the dead and had given him the place of honor at the right hand of the Most High. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah who would come again on the clouds of heaven to judge the world, but they certainly did not identify him with God and there is no reason to suppose that they regarded him as a divine being or that they thought of him as anything more than God's servant and anointed one.¹

And not only was their God the God of Israel, the law of their lives was the Jewish law whose permanent authority they did not think of questioning. How far they were influenced by Jesus' reinterpretation of the law we have no

¹ Cf. my *God of the Early Christians*, p. 22.

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means of knowing, but at any rate it is significant that while they remembered and preserved many of his words upon the subject they were not led either by his words or deeds to regard the law as less binding on their consciences than it had always been.

Again the Bible of these disciples of Jesus was the Jewish Bible whose divine origin they were as certain of as were any of their fellows. To be sure they interpreted many portions of it in a new way, discovering in it prophecies of the Messiah and particularly of the life of Jesus and of his suffering and death, and thus gaining the strongest kind of confirmation for their belief in him. That the sacred book of the Jews, which we know as the Old Testament, was used in this way was historically of great importance. As time passed it was more and more largely exploited in the interest of the new faith and became finally an immense storehouse of material upon which apologists freely drew in their defense of Christianity. This Christianizing, as it may be called, of the Jewish Bible, alone made possible its retention by Gentile Christians.

Another and even greater achievement on the part of these early disciples was their preservation of a knowledge of Jesus, not of his words and deeds merely but of the man himself. Were it not for them we should know nothing about him. It is to them we owe our Synoptic Gospels, not indeed directly but indirectly, for without the memories of Jesus cherished and preserved by his disciples those Gospels would have been impossible.

Thus although Jesus' personal followers remained loyal and faithful Jews, and although the rise of Christianity as a new religion distinct from Judaism was due to others than they, the Christian movement is profoundly indebted to them. Without them indeed its history, had it had a history at all, would have been altogether different.

CHAPTER II

THE APOSTLE PAUL

ALREADY long before the beginning of the Christian Era the Jews were widely dispersed throughout the world and in the time of Augustus and Tiberius there were large colonies of them in all the great cities of the empire. They were apt to be unpopular with their Gentile neighbors, in part because of their clannishness and contempt for other religions, but as a rule they were intelligent, industrious and prosperous, and in spite of the sport made of their peculiar customs and dietary rules, they enjoyed the respect of many of the better people of the community and were protected by the government in the exercise of their religion. They were even exempt because of their religious principles from certain common obligations, such as military service, labor on the Sabbath, and later the worship of the emperor. Some of them were as punctilious in their observance of ancestral law and custom as any of their Palestinian brethren, but it was not easy to live as strict Jews in the midst of Gentile communities and it was natural that many of them, while remaining loyal to the national faith, should fall into ways that seemed very loose to the Jews of the homeland.

There was much in the religion of the Jews to appeal to thoughtful and serious-minded Gentiles. Their devout faith in God, their high moral principles, their belief in divine revelation and in a future judgment, the simplicity of their synagogue-worship and their rejection of idolatry in every form — all this commended itself to many and the result

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was considerable accessions from the Gentile world. For generations the Jews had been active propagandists and had shown themselves eager to secure proselytes. In their desire to promote the credit of their faith and multiply its adherents they naturally emphasized the features calculated to attract outsiders and minimized those that must repel them ; but at least circumcision, the observance of the decalogue, including the keeping of the Sabbath, and abstinence from certain customs and certain kinds of food most abhorrent to the Jews, were everywhere demanded of those who wished to be counted full members of the family of Israel.¹

In addition to these proselytes there were many who were impressed with the superiority of certain aspects of the Jewish religion but disliked other features of it and were unwilling for one or another reason to enroll themselves among the Jews. Wherever there were Jewish colonies there was apt to be a fringe of such sympathizers who frequented the synagogue, worshipped the God of the Jews, read the Jewish Bible, and governed their lives by its moral principles.

The intercourse between the Jews of the dispersion and their religious kinsmen in Palestine was very active. Especially at the time of the great annual feasts Jerusalem was visited by devout pilgrims from all parts of the world, some of whom took up their residence in the city and remained there permanently. Divers languages were spoken in the streets and there were numerous synagogues of Hellenistic Jews, as those of the dispersion were commonly called whatever their birthplace or their native tongue. The situation being what it was it is evident that, quite independently of any deliberate effort on the part of the personal disciples

¹ Some Jewish teachers held that even without circumcision pious Gentiles might hope for salvation in the world to come, but that they could not expect to share in the glories of the Messianic age.

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of Jesus, a knowledge of the new sect was bound in course of time to be carried beyond the walls of Jerusalem and the borders of Palestine. Already at the time of Paul's conversion there was a group of disciples as far away as Damascus and it was not long before there were many of them in Antioch, the most important city of western Asia.

The spread of the movement beyond Palestine inevitably brought it before long to the knowledge of others besides Jews. Gentiles who frequented the synagogues, or were personally intimate with their Jewish neighbors, could not fail to hear about it. To such persons the Messiahship of Jesus meant nothing — the Messianic hope was too strictly national to appeal to others than Jews — but the figure of a dying and risen Saviour was something they could understand and it could not fail to attract attention and enlist the interest of a growing number.

Among the most striking phenomena of the age were the so-called mystery-religions. For centuries the Greek mysteries — Dionysiac, Orphic, Eleusinian — had offered to their initiates a blessed immortality. With personal salvation and the assurance of a life of happiness beyond the grave the national religions had nothing to do. This lack the mysteries were intended to supply, and the same was true of various oriental cults that were carrying on an active propaganda in the Roman world. The desire for personal immortality was becoming more and more general. In this desire these foreign cults found their opportunity and their prestige grew rapidly in the early days of the empire. The most popular of them were the Phrygian cult of Cybele and Attis, the Syrian cult of Astarte and Adonis, and the Egyptian cult of Isis and Osiris (or Serapis), and later, Persian Mithraism which spread within the empire only after the first century of our era. A common feature of these cults, with the exception of Mithraism which was of a different

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type, was the figure of a dying and risen deity, the Lord of the cult, with whom the devotee came into union or with whose experiences he identified himself and so passed from death to life and gained the assurance of a blessed immortality.

It is not at all surprising in view of the wide and growing influence of these religions that when the disciples in Antioch and elsewhere preached a crucified and risen Jesus they should be regarded as the heralds of another mystery-religion, or religion of salvation, and that Jesus himself should be taken for the divine Lord of the cult through whose death and resurrection salvation was to be had. That he was called *Christos*, the Greek word for Messiah or anointed one, made no difference. The title so full of significance to Jews carried no meaning to Gentiles. To the latter it was no more than a proper name. They were interested not in a Jewish national Messiah but in a personal Saviour; not in Jesus the Christ but in Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus the Lord. In passing from Jews to Gentiles the faith of the original disciples was thus transformed and instead of a Jewish Messianic sect there came into existence a new religion, one of the many religions of personal salvation abroad in the Roman Empire.

The relation of all this to the apostle Paul is not altogether clear. Apparently even before he was converted from a persecutor to a disciple of Christ the new religion was in existence in Antioch and elsewhere. He did not originate it; he found it already there. As a Jew — for he remained a Jew even after his conversion — it might have been expected that he would refuse to have anything to do with it and would decline to recognize its adherents as genuine followers of Christ. But he took an altogether different course. Convinced by the fruits of the Spirit manifested by the Gentile converts, he not only recognized,

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as Barnabas and many others were doing, the legitimacy of the new form of Christianity, but he also re-read in its light the significance of Jesus and the meaning of his work. Not that he took his interpretation from these Gentile Christians — that interpretation was too largely the fruit of his own experience as a Jew to have been learned from them; but they seem to have supplied the clue that enabled him to interpret his experience as he did. I cannot recount that experience here or discuss the circumstances that led to his conversion. I must content myself with a bare summary of his Christian faith.¹

The heart of it was the belief that Jesus Christ is a divine being who by his death and resurrection saves those that are united to him by faith. In this belief Paul found the answer to a problem that was causing him grave concern, how to overcome sin and live a life of perfect righteousness in thought as well as deed. The salvation he was seeking was primarily salvation from sin rather than death; its end righteousness rather than immortality. The difficulty he had experienced in realizing his moral ideal he explained, in the light of the common Hellenistic dualism of the age, as due to the possession of human nature or flesh.² The vision of Jesus Christ to which he traced his conversion he interpreted as the vision of a divine being who had come down from heaven and assumed human flesh and had laid it off again in order that men, identifying themselves with him in his death and resurrection, might die to the flesh and live a new life of perfect righteousness in the Spirit.

¹ For a fuller treatment of Paul see my *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, chaps. III and IV, with which may be compared my *God of the Early Christians*, chap. I.

² Paul was a Jew of the Dispersion; and Tarsus, his native city, was an important centre of Greek culture, famed for its educational advantages and its devotion to intellectual pursuits. It is therefore not surprising that, Jew though he was, he was not impervious to the influence of Hellenistic thinking and Hellenistic ways of looking at things.

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This interpretation of Christ's death and resurrection was, so far as we know, original with Paul. Akin as it was to the belief in a dead and risen Lord underlying the current mystery-religions it was yet profoundly different, for it was ethical through and through. In at least some of the cults purity of life was insisted on as a pre-condition of initiation and they often had a wholesome moral effect on the lives of their initiates. But in none of them was the moral interest as fundamental and controlling as in Paul. Out of his own moral struggle was born his faith in Christ who was to him above all else a saviour from sin and a power for righteousness. In Paul's hands therefore the new mystery-religion became in a sense true of none of the others an ethical religion, a character it has never altogether lost, overlaid as it has been with much that is extraneous and irrelevant. In spite of all the differences between Paul and Jesus, in this fundamental matter they were one — a fact of the greatest historical moment.

Paul's controlling ethical interest kept him from the vagaries and excesses into which many mystics both Christian and pagan have fallen. Though he too knew the delights of spiritual ecstasy, though he could speak with tongues¹ more than all the brethren, and though he had been caught up even to the third heaven and heard words which it was not lawful for man to utter, he yet laid the emphasis elsewhere. It was better, he declared, to speak five words with the understanding than ten thousand words in a tongue, and faith and hope and even knowledge, he insisted, were less than love. A genuine mystery-religion he was proclaiming, a religion in which men become completely

¹ Speaking "with tongues," or "in a tongue," meant the utterance, under the stress of overwhelming religious emotion, of unintelligible sounds supposed to be prompted by the Spirit and to reveal his presence. The phenomenon was not confined to primitive Christianity, and is psychologically easily explicable.

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one with the divine Christ, and which therefore offers all the spiritual exaltation to be found in any of the cults; but he subordinated everything to the one great end of Christlike living. Herein lies his chief distinction and his principal claim to remembrance.

Identification with Christ in his death and resurrection — and upon this everything hinged — was brought about, according to Paul, by faith. His interpretation of it as a mystical bond of union between the believer and his Lord was wholly new. Faith as personal trust in God, or as the conviction that what he promises he will perform, had a fundamental place in Jewish piety. The Stoics also emphasized the importance of faith. To them it meant a firm persuasion of higher spiritual values such as raises a man above the things of sense and time and enables him to live a life of independence and serenity. The Alexandrian Jew Philo was the great theologian of faith before Paul. Like Paul he made it central in religion, but his interpretation of it was similar to that of the Stoics and the profound mysticism of the Apostle was altogether lacking.

In the current mystery-religions identification between the devotee and the Lord of the cult was supposed to be brought about by various rites of initiation: the taurobolium, or bath of blood, the eating of the flesh of the sacrificial beast and the like. There was something of this in Paul too, for he thought of the believer as buried with Christ in baptism and as feeding upon him in the eucharist. But to Paul this was secondary not primary. His emphasis fell not on rites and ceremonies and sacraments but on faith, the moral attitude whereby a man becomes and remains mystically united to his Lord. Throughout Paul was dealing with real not legal categories. It was transformation he was interested in rather than forgiveness — not that a man should be treated better than he deserved but that he should become

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such an one as to deserve life instead of death. There was no magnifying of human merit or ability in this; no one ever thought less of human merit or of human ability than Paul. The transformation he was counting on was supernatural. The new life upon which a man enters when he becomes united to Christ is divine not human; it is Christ's life not his own. "It is not I that live but Christ that liveth in me."

In the mystery-cults the great end was union with the Lord of the cult and ultimate deification. As far as deification Paul did not go, at least in explicit statement. He was too much of a Jew to find such a notion congenial. But the distinction was one of form rather than of substance. Christ is divine and the Christian becomes so completely identified with him that he too is in effect divine, though Paul contented himself with calling him spiritual. The word spiritual however really meant the same as divine, for spirit to Paul was divine as flesh was human.

An important consequence of Paul's interpretation of the Christian life as the divine life in man, or as man's life in the divine, was that salvation seemed to him a present and not merely a future reality. Becoming identified with Christ in his death and resurrection the believer is not simply assured of rising again at some future time to enjoy a blessed immortality, he rises now to a new life in the Spirit and thus is already saved. If he has risen with Christ in the Spirit he will not perish when death overtakes him, but having laid off his fleshly body he will rise in a new spiritual body. His future resurrection will be a spiritual not a fleshly resurrection. The latter of course would be only a curse not a blessing.¹

The Christian's life in the Spirit is a life of holiness. Dead

¹ As a Pharisee Paul believed in the resurrection of the body, but he reinterpreted it as a spiritual not a fleshly resurrection.

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to the flesh he is dead also to the sins of the flesh and no longer finds it impossible to live as he ought to live. The flesh has ceased to dominate him, and all his impulses are spiritual and divine. Freedom from the control of the flesh meant to Paul freedom also from the control of law. The Christian life is a life of liberty and spontaneity. Law, by which Paul meant objective law or divine enactment, was given because of sin. It was intended to restrain men from following their natural impulses. But the life of the Christian is a divine life whose impulses are holy and good, as Christ's are, and therefore no law is needed to keep him righteous. The life of the Christian expresses itself naturally in Christ-like conduct. This Paul was sure of even though he recognized that the Christian was in constant danger of coming again under the control of the flesh and so must be always on his guard. If he falls under the sway of the flesh he becomes subject to law; but as long as he holds fast to Christ and lives in the Spirit he is a free man.

The Christian liberty of which Paul was thinking was liberty not only from the Jewish law but from all objective law. Others before him had recognized that the Christian is free from the obligation to observe the law of the Jews, but Paul went further and declared him free from the obligation to observe any law and that too though righteousness was the Apostle's supreme concern. This did not mean that law was a bad thing; on the contrary Paul declared that the law is holy and good. It meant only that true righteousness is spontaneous not forced. The life of the Christian freely expresses the character of Christ; and as the law of God expresses the character of God with whom Christ is at one, the life of the Christian will be in accord with the divine law not opposed to it. The Christian lives as God would have him live not because he is required so to live

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but because his character is Godlike. It was natural that Paul should be accused of libertinism and antinomianism and his position denounced as dangerous in the extreme. It was natural too that few even of his own disciples should understand and follow him. Either righteousness in obedience to law or unrighteousness and wickedness — there seemed to most of them no other alternative.¹

Although Paul's assertion of Christian liberty meant the release of the believer from the obligation to observe any law, including that of the Jews he insisted that law had its place in the providence of God. It fulfilled the rôle of a pedagogue or schoolmaster to bring men to a knowledge of their sin and thus to a recognition of their need of salvation. Without the law there would have been no consciousness of sin and consequently no faith in Christ as a saviour. This notion of the function of law, a notion entirely original with Paul, enabled him to retain his respect for the Jewish system and his belief in its divine origin even while he broke with it.

I have said that the heart of Paul's Christian faith was the conviction that Jesus Christ is a divine being who by his death and resurrection saves those that are united to him by faith. That he believed Jesus to be a divine being there is no possible doubt. Not only the way he speaks of him in his epistles but his theory of salvation itself makes this certain. For Gentiles such a belief was simple enough but for Paul and other Jews it made difficulties. How was the divine Lord Jesus Christ related to the one supreme God, the creator and ruler of the world, in whom all Jews believed? It is significant that though Paul called Christ Lord and assigned him divine functions and recognized him as an

¹ It was perhaps easier for Paul whose character was already formed under Jewish discipline to take the position he did than for those who lacked his background and experience.

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object of worship, he did not identify him with God. On the contrary he assumed that Christ and God were two not one.

The difficulty involved in the recognition of two divine beings and two objects of worship was solved by calling Christ the Son of God, a title by which he came ultimately to be everywhere known among Christians. God was thus thought of as the Father of Christ in a peculiar sense, and already by Paul the word Father was used to express the relation of God also to believers in Christ — united to Christ they become sons of God as other men are not. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are sons of God." Not men in general, according to Paul, but Christ and Christians alone are God's sons.

Though Paul, as I have said, distinguished Christ from God, he was clear that Christ was a divine being possessed of the divine nature and that in becoming united to him the believer is really united to God. This means that Paul thought of God not simply in personal terms but also, if one may so express oneself, in terms of substance — as spiritual being which may be shared by more than one — a very important fact in view of the later theological development.

This conception, fruit rather of Paul's mystical idea of salvation than of theological speculation, was not identical with the common Hellenistic idea of spiritual substance. It was ethical through and through. The interest underlying it was not metaphysical (or ontological) but soteriological, and it meant for Paul no depersonalizing of the divine being, as it meant for many theologians of a later day. Nevertheless the conception was of another sort from the common Jewish idea of God which Paul shared with his fellow-countrymen. The inconsistency was obscured by the fact that he usually spoke of the indwelling Christ or the indwelling Spirit instead of the indwelling God. Sometimes

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to be sure he spoke of God as in the Christian, or of the Christian in God, but as a rule when thinking of the divine indwelling it was to Christ or to the Spirit that he referred, that is, his mysticism commonly took the form of a Christ-mysticism or a Spirit-mysticism. Between Christ and the Spirit he drew no clear distinction. At times he spoke of the Spirit as the Spirit of God, at times as the Spirit of Christ. Again he used the words Christ and Spirit interchangeably and ascribed the same functions to both, and in one passage he explicitly declared that "the Lord is the Spirit,"¹ thus identifying Christ, the divine Lord of the cult, with the Spirit supposed to be present in the church. This meant also that the Spirit, instead of being present simply in the meetings of believers, or being given only to certain favored individuals, or to meet special crises or needs, was the common possession of all Christians, the divine element in which they lived their lives and which made them other than mere creatures of flesh.

As already said Paul solved the difficulty involved in recognizing two divine beings—God the creator of the universe and Christ the Lord of the cult—by calling the latter the Son of the former. This solution commended itself to those of his fellows, whether Jews or Gentiles, who felt the difficulty as he did. But there were many, at any rate of the Gentiles, that were not troubled by it. Some of them found it easy to recognize any number of divine beings as they had been in the habit of doing; some of them were satisfied to accept Christ the divine Lord and Saviour without troubling themselves about his relationship to the supreme God or without asking whether there was any supreme God, or any God greater than he. Salvation they were immediately interested in; the creation and government of the universe did not concern them.² Their knowl-

¹ 2 Cor. 3:17.

² See my *God of the Early Christians*, chap. II.

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edge of Christ to be sure came from Jews and the Jews believed in only one God, the maker and ruler of the world. But this did not mean that Gentiles could not accept Christ without accepting the Jewish God any more than it meant that they could not accept Christ without accepting the Jewish law, including circumcision and the whole system of ritual requirements. Some did adopt Judaism in its entirety, though the number must have been relatively small. Many more took over certain features of Judaism, particularly the God worshipped by the Jews, the Jewish Scriptures, and the moral law contained therein. But others rejected Judaism altogether — God, Bible and law. Of these Gentile Christians I shall have more to say later. Here I have been concerned only with Paul and his interpretation of the Christian faith.

I have spoken of Paul in this chapter as a mystic and in view of the loose way in which the term is commonly employed it may be worth while, for the sake of avoiding misunderstanding, to say a few words here on the subject of mysticism even at the risk of anticipating the later development.

There have been current within the Christian church two forms of mysticism, related and yet distinct, the one ontological as it may fairly be called, the other epistemological. The former which appeared more or less crudely in the mystery-cults and of which Paul was the first great exponent among the Christians, so far as known to us, means the absorption of the human by the divine, or such a union between the two that the former is deified, or is endowed with certain qualities of the divine nature and thus transformed. The roots of this mysticism, so it would seem, commonly lie in the realm of the subconscious. There floods the conscious being a mysterious sense of exaltation,

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enlargement, or power, and he interprets it as the influx of the divine. It is harmonious with monism, but it exists also with dualism, as in Paul. In the latter case the divine that takes possession of the human is thought of as altogether different and as crossing an otherwise impassable chasm in coming into union with it. The effects of the union may be physical only, the transformation of a man from a mortal to an immortal being, or they may be ethical or intellectual as well, holiness taking the place of corruption, moral power of moral weakness, and spiritual vision of spiritual blindness.

The second or epistemological form of mysticism involves the belief that man may know God directly; that he need not depend on tradition or on the exercise of his reason drawing conclusions from observed facts in nature and history, but may come into the divine presence and enjoy an immediate vision of God even here and now. Often this kind of mysticism is found in connection with the former kind and presupposes it; but often it is found alone, mystical vision or intuition being counted a legitimate path to a knowledge of the divine quite independently of all ontological implications. The common note of both forms of mysticism is immediacy: in both there is direct contact between the human and the divine.

It is unnecessary to say more upon the subject at this point. Mysticism in one or the other of the forms referred to, or in both at once, we shall come upon frequently in the course of our study and shall then have occasion to examine it more closely.

CHAPTER III

JOHN AND IGNATIUS

THOUGH Paul was the greatest thinker in the early church his thought was not generally understood and his interpretation of Christianity was not widely accepted. Among those who felt his influence and followed him more or less closely was the unknown author of the Fourth Gospel and of the so-called Epistles of John, who wrote about the beginning of the second century, and Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who wrote a few years later. Both belonged to the same part of the world, the former probably to Ephesus in Asia Minor, the latter to Antioch in Syria. The former, who may be called for convenience sake by his traditional name John, agreed with Paul in regarding Christianity as a religion of personal salvation instead of a Jewish Messianic movement. In his hands it was as truly a mystery-religion as in the hands of Paul. Salvation comes by mystical union with the divine and the Christian life is divine and supernatural.

Like Paul John shared the common Jewish idea of God as a personal being, the creator and ruler of the world, whose will is the law of men's lives. His favorite name for God was Father which appears more frequently in his writings than in all the rest of the New Testament. As by Paul, God was thought of as the Father of Christ and of Christians not of men in general or of sinners and unbelievers; not birth but regeneration, or the new birth, makes men children of God. Like Paul also John emphasized the love of God,

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which appears as all inclusive in the moving words: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life"; but seems generally to have been thought of as confined to Christian disciples. John carried his emphasis on divine love so far as to omit almost entirely, in contrast with the Synoptic Gospels, the stern and severe side of God's character. It is to John that is chiefly due the wide prevalence of the so-called Christian idea of God as a loving father.¹

With his personal conception of God as the creator and ruler of the world and the Father both of Christ and of Christians, John combined, as Paul did, without attempting to reconcile them and apparently without realizing any discrepancy between them, the mystical conception of God as spirit in which Christ and Christians share as well as the Father. Of the divinity of Christ he also made a great deal. While he rarely spoke of him as Kyrios or Lord he followed Paul in calling him the Son of God — his standing title for him — and he emphasized his preëxistence and his complete oneness with the Father. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," he represents Christ as saying.² His Gospel was written to recount the deeds and words not of a mere man but of a God on earth, and not of another and independent God but of the Son of the supreme God, who is truly one with him and shares in his divine nature.

John not only agreed with Paul in recognizing Christ as divine, as most of the Christians of his day were doing, he also went as far as Paul did in emphasizing the divineness of the Christian life. The believer is so closely united to God that he abides in God and God in him. "Hereby we know that we abide in him and he in us because he hath

¹ On John's idea of God see my *God of the Early Christians*, pp. 36 ff.

² John 14:9.

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given us of his Spirit.”¹ “Whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him and he in God.”² “God is love and he that abideth in love abideth in God and God in him.”³ The indwelling divine or the divine in whom the Christian abides is spoken of sometimes as Christ or the Spirit, as commonly by Paul, sometimes and still oftener as God.

Still farther John was one with Paul in thinking of salvation as present, not simply future. “He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life.”⁴ John also drew the conclusion that the life of the Christian is — that it must be — free from sin. The sinner is a child of the devil but he that is begotten of God does not sin.

Moreover, John was one with Paul in his sacramentarianism. Both baptism and the eucharist he recognized, as Paul did, as means of union with Christ, and he even went further and asserted that they are necessary means and that without them no one can be saved. “Except one be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”;⁵ and “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood ye have not life in yourselves.”⁶ In the realism of the discourse on the eucharist from which the latter words are quoted John also went beyond Paul in form at least if not in substance. Such differences however are but minor. In their general interpretation of baptism and the eucharist the two were one and their oneness meant much in days to come.

On the other hand, though John, as has been seen, agreed with Paul in many matters there were great and significant differences between them. For one thing John did not

¹ 1 John 4: 13.

⁴ John 5: 24.

² *Ibid.* vs. 15.

⁵ John 3: 5.

³ *Ibid.* vs. 16.

⁶ John 6: 53.

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accept Paul's view of the Christian's relation to law. Though he agreed with him in recognizing that salvation is a present reality and that the Christian life is divine and sinless his doctrine of Christian liberty he rejected altogether. While with Paul and most of his fellow-disciples he believed that Christians were free from all obligation to observe the Jewish law, he insisted they were still under law as truly as ever. The Christian life is not the free and spontaneous expression of the character of a child of God, but the keeping of God's commandments which include both faith and conduct. "This is his commandment that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another as he commanded us. And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him and he in him."¹ It was historically of no little moment that though he shared Paul's doctrine of the indwelling Christ John refrained from drawing the conclusion that the Christian like Christ is free from all bondage and that law no longer has dominion over him. If even one so largely in sympathy with Paul could not go with him in this matter, how could others be expected to whose general point of view was wholly different?

Again John seems to have known nothing in his own experience of the bitter moral struggle that led to Paul's radical dualism of flesh and spirit. He reminds us of Paul, to be sure, when he distinguishes between flesh and spirit in the third chapter of the Gospel, but he stops short of Paul's dualism. Salvation as he conceived it did not mean the destruction of the flesh. Rather it included the flesh as well as the spirit; both Christ's resurrection and that of others is a resurrection of the flesh. Salvation moreover is brought about not merely by dying and rising again with Christ but by the knowledge of God revealed in him.

John's departure from Paul at this point was peculiarly

¹ 1 John 3 : 23-24.

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significant. Since he lacked the Apostle's profound and epochal moral experience the symbolism of dying and rising again with Christ — the symbolism of the mysteries — could have no such meaning to him as it had to Paul and it is not surprising that he made no use of it. He found the chief means of union with God not in the identification of oneself with Christ in his death and resurrection but in knowledge. "This is life eternal to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou didst send."¹ This is a genuine Gnostic utterance and John's kinship at this point was rather with the Gnostics than with Paul.² Salvation had its ethical aspect, to be sure, for according to John knowledge of God meant love for God and love meant obedience. At the same time though he interpreted the knowledge of God in a moral sense in emphasizing it as he did and equating it with eternal life he showed that his idea of salvation and of the way of salvation was not wholly Paul's. † Salvation is not only escape from sin but also the knowledge of God, and still more, to know God is itself to escape from sin, for to know him, who is love, is to love him, and to love him is to keep his commandments.

The mission of Christ was to reveal the Father and where his revelation is accepted is eternal life, where it is rejected is eternal death. Christ manifested the Father by his words and his works as well as by his suffering and death, and even his death itself was of worth chiefly as a revelation of God's love. Thus Christ's whole life had a value for John that it lacked for Paul. To Paul only the incarnation, death and resurrection were important; he would never have thought of writing a gospel even had he possessed the necessary information. But to John everything Christ said

¹ John 17:3.

² Paul, too, emphasized knowledge, but he did not identify it with or make it a condition of salvation.

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and did and suffered had its meaning as a part of his revelation of God.

In accordance with his changed idea of Christ's work John's notion of faith was significantly different from Paul's. Faith, it is true, was fundamental with him also, but instead of being thought of as the mystical bond of union between the believer and Christ whereby the believer dies and rises again with Christ and so is saved, it was taken to mean rather the recognition of Christ as the manifestation of God. The central fact upon which faith laid hold was not Christ's work for the sinner but his relationship to God. It was therefore no accident that John had more to say about the nature of Christ than Paul had and dwelt upon his preëxistent as well as his present connection with God. John's substitution of an intellectual interpretation of faith for Paul's mystical interpretation was historically of great importance, all the more important because his general interpretation of Christianity was mystical as Paul's was.

The relation between Paul and John in all this was not unlike the relation between the Gnostics and the mystery-cults. Gnosticism was allied to the mysteries and was itself in a sense one of them. But in its controlling emphasis on knowledge it went beyond most of them and was considered by its adherents a higher stage of religion. John apparently conceived his relation to his Christian predecessors, including Paul, in a similar way. He would build upon them but transcend them in his interpretation of Christ and his salvation. He wrote his Gospel not to supplant but to supplement the Synoptic Gospels.¹ Christ was a man to him as well as to the Synoptists but he was God as well. Similarly he emphasized the knowledge or vision of God not in place of righteousness and love for the brethren but as the completion and crown of all else. In spite of all

¹ If he knew them, as some modern scholars think he did not.

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the radical differences between him and the Gnostics, both pagan and Christian, his attitude was in some respects akin to theirs.

Closely related to both Paul and John was Ignatius, bishop of Antioch in the early part of the second century, who is commonly known, like Clement, Barnabas, Hermas and others, as one of the Apostolic Fathers. We have from his pen seven letters written while he was on his way to Rome to suffer martyrdom during the reign of the emperor Trajan. Four of the letters were written in Smyrna, the other three in Troas. On their journey from Antioch Ignatius and his guards had taken a road lying to the north of Ephesus, Magnesia and Tralles, and the Christians of those cities, disappointed at not seeing him as they had hoped to do, sent representatives to meet him at Smyrna and express their sympathy. It was in reply to their friendly messages that Ignatius wrote three of his letters. At the same time he wrote to the church of Rome advising the Christians there of his coming and begging them not to do anything to secure his release and thus prevent his martyrdom. From Troas a little later he despatched letters to the churches of Philadelphia and Smyrna and to Polycarp, bishop of the latter church, requesting them to send delegates to Antioch to congratulate the Christians there on the cessation of the persecution which they had been suffering and to which he had fallen a victim.

Ignatius was a typical martyr to whom it was the greatest privilege and the highest honour to die for the name of Christ. And his letters reflect this spirit in an uncommonly vivid and impressive way. Thus he writes to the Christians at Rome: "Bear with me; I know what is expedient for me. Now am I beginning to be a disciple. May nought of things visible and things invisible envy me, that I may

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attain unto Jesus Christ. Come fire and cross and grapplings with wild beasts, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushing of my whole body! Come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me! Only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ." "The pangs of a new birth are upon me. Bear with me, brethren. Do not hinder me from living; do not desire my death. Bestow not upon the world one who desireth to be God's, neither allure him with material things. Suffer me to receive the pure light. When I am come thither then shall I be a man. Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God."¹

They are remarkable letters, fiery, incisive, vigorous and eloquent beyond any other writings of the post-apostolic period. They contain many striking and quotable sentences, such, for instance, as the following: "It is better to keep silence and to be than to talk and not to be." "It is meet that we not only be called Christians but also be Christians." "Where there is more toil there is much gain." "A Christian has no authority over himself but giveth his time to God." "Christianity is a thing of power whenever it is hated by the world." "I am God's wheat and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread."

The letters naturally contain no systematic statement of Ignatius' Christian beliefs, and yet there runs through them a very definite conception of Christianity, a genuinely mystical conception, which allies him to Paul and John and distinguishes him sharply from all the other so-called Apostolic Fathers. The differences, to be sure, between him and both Paul and John are many and serious but in spite of them the kinship is very marked.

To Ignatius as to Paul and John Christianity was a religion of personal salvation. Man's great need is immortality or escape from death and this he may secure through Jesus

¹ Romans, chaps. 5-6.

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Christ.¹ Ignatius' interest was the same as that of the mysteries. In writing to the Ephesians he even called his readers "fellow-mystagogues," or "fellow-initiates."² As in the mysteries immortality is to be secured by union with deity. Ignatius does not represent his Christian readers as actually deified by their union with deity but he speaks of them as "partaking of God" and "full of God,"³ and over and over again he uses the phrase "attain unto God."⁴

Union with deity is brought about by union with Jesus Christ the Saviour, who is himself divine and preëxistent.⁵ Upon the divinity of Christ Ignatius lays great emphasis. He not only calls him Lord (κύριος)⁶ with Paul and other early Christians but he also calls him God over and over again. "Our God Jesus the Christ was conceived by Mary."⁷ "Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God."⁸ "I glorify Jesus Christ, the God who has thus given you wisdom."⁹ This does not mean that Ignatius identified Christ with the supreme God, the creator and ruler of the world. Like Paul and John he called him the Son of God and distinguished him from God the Father. But though Christ was the Son and not the Father he was none the less God. The salutation at the beginning of the letter to the Romans brings out in striking fashion both the deity of Christ and his distinction from the Father. "Ignatius who is also Theophorus, to the church which has found mercy in the majesty of the Most High Father and of

¹ Eph. 17, 19, 20; Mag. 5, 6; Trall. 1, 9; Rom. 2, 4; Phil. 9; Polycarp 2.

² Fellow-initiates with Paul (Παύλου συμμύσταται) Eph. 12.

³ Eph. 4; Mag. 14.

⁴ θεοῦ ἐπιτυγχάνειν (e.g. Eph. 12; Mag. 14; Trall. 12, 13).

⁵ Christ is called Saviour by Ignatius in Eph. 1; Mag. Introd.; Phil. 9; Smyr. 7. His preëxistence is mentioned in Mag. 6: "Jesus Christ who was with the Father before the ages."

⁶ κύριος is used of Christ more than thirty times in Ignatius' epistles.

⁷ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, Eph. 18.

⁸ τοῦ θεοῦ μου, Rom. 6.

⁹ Smyr. 1.

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Jesus Christ his only Son : the church beloved and enlightened by the will of him who willed all things that are, according to the love of Jesus Christ our God."

Being God, Christ became man, thus uniting God and man in his own person. Ignatius laid great stress upon the reality of Christ's earthly life and that not simply because there were many who were denying it. Only if Christ's human nature was real as well as his divine nature could he impart immortality to man. And so Ignatius insisted that the birth, the earthly life, the death and the resurrection were all alike genuine. "Be deaf, therefore, when anyone speaks to you apart from Jesus Christ who was of the lineage of David and Mary, who was truly born and ate and drank, was truly brought to trial before Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died while those in heaven and on earth and under the earth looked on ; who also was truly raised from the dead." ¹

By the birth of Christ a union of the divine and human was effected ; by the death and resurrection the human was endowed with immortality.² Although Ignatius brought the death as well as the resurrection into connection with the bestowing of immortality he sometimes laid stress on the death as if it had some peculiar value of its own. Just what that value was does not appear, but the fact that he commonly spoke of the passion instead of the death suggests that he found significance in Christ's suffering over and above his mere death.³ In general he seems to have felt, perhaps in the light of his own approaching martyrdom, that suffering was productive of good. He may have looked on Christ's sufferings in the same way without asking himself what their particular effect was.

¹ Trall. 9 ; cf. also Smyr. I ff.

² Smyr. 5, 7.

³ Passion and resurrection, Eph. 20 ; Smyr. 7, 12 ; birth, passion and resurrection, Mag. 11. Cf. Trall. 11 ; Phil., Introd.

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It was not a life in the spirit divorced from the flesh to which Christ rose, as Paul thought. He did not die to the flesh and leave it behind; he both died and rose in the flesh. His life after his resurrection as truly as before his death was fleshly as well as spiritual. "I know and believe that he was in the flesh even after the resurrection. And when he came to those who were with Peter he said to them: 'Take, handle me and see that I am not an incorporeal demon.' And straightway they touched him and believed, being blended with his flesh and spirit. Therefore they despised even death and were found to be superior to death. And after the resurrection he ate and drank with them as a fleshly being although united spiritually with the Father."¹

Ignatius was not a dualist as Paul was, and salvation meant to him as to John not escape from the flesh but the salvation of the flesh. There is no real existence, so he thought, without flesh, and hence if a man is to be saved his flesh must be made immortal as well as his spirit.² In agreement with John he distinguished in one passage between the spiritual and the carnal. "The carnal cannot do spiritual things nor the spiritual carnal things."³ But how little of Paul's dualism between flesh and spirit there was in this is shown by the next sentence: "Even the things ye do according to the flesh are spiritual, for ye do all things in Jesus Christ."⁴

As salvation did not mean release from the flesh so it did not mean release from law. Of Paul's notion of Christian liberty there is no trace in Ignatius' letters. To be sure in one passage it is said, "If I suffer I shall be a freedman of Jesus Christ and shall rise in him free."⁵ But the context shows that this has nothing to do with the liberty from law which Paul taught. Like John and most of his Christian

¹ Smyr. 3.

² Cf. Smyr. 2.

³ Eph. 8.

⁴ Cf. also Eph. 10; Smyr. 13; Pol. 2.

⁵ Rom. 4.

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contemporaries Ignatius was quite unable to understand and appreciate Paul's position at this point.

Salvation for the Christian is secured by union with Christ. Christ's human nature was made immortal by being united with his divine nature; others are made immortal as they become one with him. At this point Ignatius was as mystical as Paul and John. The Pauline phrase *in Christ* is very common in his epistles and the indwelling Christ is likewise referred to.¹ Ignatius also speaks more than once of Christians as members of Christ.² Though he thus agreed with Paul and John in interpreting the Christian life in mystical terms and in emphasizing the Christian's oneness with Christ he apparently did not draw their conclusion that the Christian life is perfectly holy and free from sin. To be sure he declares in one passage, "No one who professes faith sins, nor does he who has attained love hate" (Eph. 14). But read in the light of the context and of his letters as a whole this looks like nothing more than the expression of a pious hope or a warning to hypocrites. At any rate the conviction that the Christian cannot sin was certainly not of the essence of his faith as it was of Paul's. As a bishop of the second or third generation, intimately acquainted with the failings of his people, he must have found Paul's heroic belief difficult to say the least.

In his view of the means of union with Christ Ignatius agreed with Paul and John in part but only in part. Of the former's mystical idea of faith as a bond of union between the believer and his Lord there is little or no trace, though it is perhaps suggested in the following passage: "Straightway they touched him and believed, being blended with his flesh and spirit."³ Faith is mentioned frequently, often in asso-

¹ Cf. e.g. Eph. 3, 11, 15, 20; Mag. 12; Trall. 9.

² Eph. 4; Trall. 11.

³ Smyr. 3; cf. also Phil. 5.

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ciation with love,¹ and evidently Ignatius thought of it as he did of love as an essential condition of salvation, but more than this we can hardly say. In one passage he uses the word faith in an objective sense for the revealed truth of God. If a man corrupt, he says, "by false teaching the faith of God for the sake of which Jesus Christ was crucified" he will go "into the unquenchable fire together with him that listens to him."²

In general his hostility to heresy, or teaching out of harmony with the common faith of the church as he knew it, was very bitter. This hatred of heresy and the heretic — for Ignatius drew no distinction between them — was but a corollary of love for the brethren which he emphasized as earnestly as John. Heresy tends to break up the brotherhood and whoever loves the brethren cannot do otherwise than hate and oppose it.

As there is little or no trace in Ignatius' letters of Paul's mystical idea of faith so there is little or none of John's mystical idea of knowledge. To be sure he refers to Christ in one passage as the Logos through whom God revealed himself and elsewhere as the mouth by which the Father has spoken truly and as the knowledge or gnosis of God.³ But such expressions are out of line with his general emphasis and must not be pressed. His real place was not in the gnostic succession as John's was.

While Ignatius differed with Paul in his idea of faith and with John in his idea of knowledge he agreed with both of them in thinking that union with Christ is brought about or promoted by participation in the eucharist. "Have a care," he says, "to use one eucharist, for there is one flesh of our

¹ Cf. Eph. 1, 9, 14; Mag. 1, 13; Trall. 8, 9. In Trall. 2 Ignatius speaks of escaping death by believing in the death of Christ and in Smyr. 6 of suffering judgment if one does not believe in the blood of Christ.

² Eph. 16.

³ Mag. 8; Rom. 8; Eph. 17; cf. also Trall. 5.

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Lord Jesus Christ and one cup for union in his blood.”¹ And in another place he refers to the eucharist as a “medicine of immortality.”² Baptism curiously enough he mentions only once when he exhorts Polycarp, “Let your baptism remain as a weapon, your faith as a helmet, your love as a spear.”³ In Ephesians 18 he speaks of Christ as baptized that “he might purify the water,” showing that he believed there was some sanctifying quality in the water of baptism, but he does not suggest that baptism effects union with Christ as might have been expected in view of Paul’s language in the sixth chapter of Romans, nor does he count it a means of regeneration as John did.

On the other hand he made union with God and Christ depend on church membership and loyalty to the bishop. Thus he says: “For as many as are of God and Jesus Christ, they are with the bishop. And as many as repent and return to the unity of the church, they shall also be of God.”⁴ He has a great deal to say about the unity of the church and the authority of the bishop and he repeatedly emphasizes the importance and even the necessity if one would be saved of being in fellowship with the bishop and in communion with the church.⁵ Here he went beyond his predecessors and anticipated the development of later generations.⁶ His position was no doubt due in part to his fear of heresy and schism, which were evidently causing much trouble in the churches of western Asia. But back of his insistence on unity there was the idea of the church as the body of Christ which appears in Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, an idea interpreted by Ignatius to mean not simply

¹ Phil. 4; cf. Smyr. 7; Eph. 1.

² Eph. 20; cf. Rom. 7.

³ Pol. 6.

⁴ Phil. 3; cf. Eph. 4; Mag. 13.

⁵ Cf. Eph. 5, 6; Mag. 7; Trall. 2, 7; Phil. 3, 8.

⁶ There are hints of a similar attitude in 1 John.

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that union with the church is union with Christ but that without the former the latter cannot be.

Of ethical conditions of salvation such as repentance and righteousness Ignatius says comparatively little. In a passage already quoted he declares that the Lord forgives as many as repent and return to the unity of the church, and elsewhere that he forgives all that repent "if their repentance lead to the unity of God and the council of the bishop."¹ As already seen Ignatius recognized that the Christian was bound to keep the law of God and obey his commandments, and he would undoubtedly have insisted that unless he did he could not expect to be saved. But the relation between faith and obedience and between moral conduct and union with Christ he did not reflect upon or at any rate his epistles contain no sign that he did.

This brief account of the views of John and Ignatius has shown that they agreed with each other and with Paul in recognizing Christianity as a religion of personal salvation through which one secures eternal life by becoming mystically united to the divine Christ, the Son of God. While all three of them were thus at one in interpreting Christianity in mystical terms — in terms akin to those of the mystery-cults — they also differed among themselves, as has been seen, at several points. Some of these differences, particularly the rejection of Paul's dualism by both John and Ignatius and their insistence that salvation is for the flesh as well as the spirit and that the Christian life is a life of obedience to the law of God, meant much in days to come as will appear. But even so their disagreements were less important than their agreements.

¹ Phil. 8. The only other references to repentance are in Eph. 10 and Smyr. 4, 5, 9.

CHAPTER IV

THE Gnostics

THE general tendency represented by Paul, John and Ignatius, the tendency to see in Christianity a mystical religion of redemption in which salvation is attained by union with the divine Christ, was carried further by certain Christians of the second and following centuries known as Gnostics.

Gnosticism was a variegated thing. Many and diverse factors went to make it what it was. Ever since the time of Alexander the Great a religious as well as an ethnic amalgamation had been going on. Religious ideas and practices from Persia, Syria, Asia Minor and Egypt were combined in various ways and degrees with the ideas and practices of Graeco-Roman religion to form a syncretism of heterogeneous elements. In this syncretism Gnosticism had its roots and it was one of the most characteristic phenomena of the Hellenistic world, which was the scene of all sorts of divergent and often contradictory tendencies both in life and thought.

Gnosticism did not originate in Christianity nor was it confined to Christian circles. There were Gnostics before the time of Christ and there continued to be Gnostics quite outside the Christian movement and wholly apart from it. Speaking generally the controlling interest of the Gnostics, whether Christian or non-Christian, was to escape from this present evil world and to enjoy the blessings of a higher world of the spirit. They were all dualists who emphasized the contrast between spirit and matter and set over against the material world in which men live, the invisible world of

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the spirit to which they should aspire. How to attain this higher world was their great concern. Their problem was similar to that of the mystery-cults though not identical with it. They were primarily interested not in immortality but in the life of the spirit.¹ But in spite of this difference Gnosticism belonged in the same general category as the mysteries; the Gnostics too sought salvation and they sought it in mystical ways.

But Gnosticism was more than a mystery-religion; it was also a philosophy as the name implies. The Gnostics were interested in questions of theology, cosmology, and anthropology, as well as in the way of salvation, and they undertook, or at least many of them did, to formulate systems of truth which should embrace the whole range of existence. There was no divorce as a rule between their philosophy and their religion. It was not merely that religious men were interested in philosophy. Rather their philosophy had to do directly with their religion and they were interested in it only in so far as it had. The questions they dealt with, far removed from religion as some of them seem at first glance, were all intimately interwoven with it. The nature of being and of God, the origin and nature of the world and of man, the constitution of the universe and God's relation to it — all these and similar questions the Gnostics grappled with not because of a mere speculative interest in them but because of their bearing on religion. In their hands all philosophy was religious philosophy and was religiously motivated.

In the Graeco-Roman world of the period two general philosophical tendencies were prominent: Stoicism which was controllingly ethical in its interest and monistic in its ontology, and Platonism which was dualistic and predom-

¹ Like Paul they believed that they already enjoyed immortality. Cf. Irenæus, *Adv. hæc.* III. 15 : 2.

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inantly religious. Both alike were practical in purpose. Of pure speculative philosophy divorced altogether from life and moved only by the love of truth for truth's sake there was comparatively little. An orientalized Platonism, traces of which appear in Plato himself, particularly in the *Timæus*, was widespread and was steadily gathering strength and finally culminated in Plotinus and the Neoplatonists. To this general tendency the Gnostics belonged so far as they were philosophers. But they were much else than philosophers; they were religious devotees as well. And it was this combination of philosophy and practical religion that gave Gnosticism its peculiar character.

The Gnostics, as I have said, were primarily interested in the problem of salvation, in the question how to escape from this present evil world and attain the higher world of the spirit. Because they found in Christianity, as it was not unnatural they should, an answer to this great problem, many of them became Christians and joined the Christian circle. It was easy for them to do so. They were eclectics both religiously and philosophically; taking wherever they found them ideas and practices which might serve to illuminate the way of salvation and assist the individual to flee from the realm of things to the realm of the spirit. Moreover Christianity, at least as interpreted by Paul, was in some respects closely akin to their own way of looking at things and supplied them material of a most valuable sort. A divine saviour through union with whom one may escape the flesh and enter upon a new life in the spirit — what could better meet their need than this? John's emphasis on knowledge was also attractive to them as was the conception of the eucharist as a feeding upon Christ which is found in both Paul and John. No wonder they were attracted to Christianity and joined the Christian circle in ever increasing numbers.

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In their hands and in the hands of their followers Christianity was transformed into a gnostic religion of redemption, like and yet unlike the various forms of non-Christian Gnosticism. It is with these Christian Gnostics that we are concerned here. To them alone the term Gnostic is generally applied. The other Gnostics have been largely forgotten and it is only with difficulty that the names of a few of them have been recovered. The Christian Gnostics on the other hand, though by no means always understood, are familiar figures in the history of Christian doctrine and ancient philosophy. Our knowledge of them is all too meagre and yet it is much fuller than formerly, for during recent years Gnosticism like the mystery-religions has been made the subject of careful study by many scholars.

Like Gnosticism in general Christian Gnosticism was a variegated thing made up of elements from many sources. Moreover there were many Gnostic groups within the church, some of them mutually related, others quite independent, some of them closely akin to the main body of Christians, others so unlike them as to seem wholly alien. Among the most important figures were Saturninus or Satornilos of Syria, Carpocrates, Basilides and his son Isidore of Alexandria, and Valentinus of Rome. All of these had followers in considerable numbers in various parts of the empire, particularly in the great cities. Already before 150 A.D. the Valentinians, Basilidians and Satornilians were strong in Rome. The movement continued for some centuries but it passed its zenith before the end of the second century.

Unfortunately the writings of the Gnostics have largely perished and we know them almost exclusively from the attacks of their enemies. It is chiefly for this reason that they have been so long misunderstood. Of anti-heretical writers upon whom we must chiefly depend for our knowl-

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edge of them, the most important are Irenæus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Epiphanius.

It is impossible here to distinguish the various Gnostic schools and to exhibit their tenets in detail. The most that can be attempted is a general summary of the movement as a whole, and an account of those beliefs that chiefly characterized it, in order to show its place in history and to estimate its influence on the development of Christian thought. Happily, for all their differences the Gnostics, at any rate the Christian Gnostics, were at one in certain principles and it is because of these that we can embrace them under a common head and deal with them in the large.

As I have already said, they were all of them dualists, as the Platonists in general were. But their dualism was more extreme than that of other Platonists. The Platonic contrast between the material and the spiritual, the sensible and the ideal, which were conceived as two closely related orders of being, the one lower and the other higher, was transformed under the influence of Persian dualism into an absolute contradiction between matter and spirit, darkness and light, evil and good, these being regarded as altogether exclusive the one of the other and mutually hostile. Matter according to the Gnostics is not only independent of God and of a wholly different nature, it is radically and irremediably evil. Some of the Gnostics, for instance the Valentinians, were less extreme in their dualism than others and were able to reconcile it with a primeval monism, but this in no way affected the practical situation. Their dualism of spirit and matter, of God and the existing world, was as complete as that of any of the others. They too, moreover, like all the Gnostics, were thorough-going pessimists touching the present order of things. Amendment and improvement are quite impossible; the only blessing is escape from it all.

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The kinship between the dualism of the Gnostics and that of Paul was very close. Ethically Paul's dualism was as extreme as theirs, but it lacked the ontological substratum which they gave it and consequently could consort with a doctrine of divine creation and providence as theirs could not. It was inconceivable to them that God could have created this evil world or could have anything to do with it. Its origin was accounted for, as a rule, by a series of divine emanations by which the nature of deity unfolds itself and is progressively depotentialized until it is sufficiently attenuated to endure contact with matter. The process of emanation was commonly represented in symbolic form as a process of generation. The successive emanations, or æons as they were called, were personalized under the names of various qualities and attributes and were arranged in pairs of male and female powers.¹ These gave a dramatic but also a mythological character to the Gnostic cosmology, suggesting all too patently the amours of the heathen gods and bringing great disrepute upon the systems of which they formed a part. They lent themselves easily to ridicule. Some of the anti-heretical writings of the Christian Fathers deal with little else and represent the Gnostic systems as identical to all intents and purposes with Greek polytheism. This, of course, was wholly to misunderstand them. The æons were meant only as a symbolic rendering of the great process of evolution or devolution by which the world has come to be.

The existence of the world was represented as due to one of the æons, commonly the lowest in the series, who was far removed from the supreme God, the fountain head of deity, and was either ignorant of him or hostile to him. Working alone or in coöperation with angels he completed the bridging

¹ Cf. Irenæus, *Adv. hæres.* I. 1 ff; 11 ff; 14 ff; 24; Hippolytus, *Philosophumena* VI. 13; 24 f; 29.

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of the gap between the two realms of spirit and matter, brought order out of chaos and became the world-creator or demiurge as he was generally called.¹ Into the world thus formed sparks of divinity were introduced, according to common opinion not by the demiurge himself, but by a higher and more spiritual æon and without his knowledge.² These sparks of divinity found lodgment in human beings and the men thus endowed from above lived thenceforth in an alien world far from their true home. How they were to be released from their captivity and restored to the divine realm where they belonged was the great religious problem of the Gnostics. The more extreme their dualism and the greater the distance between God and the world, the more insistent was their problem. Salvation meant to them no mere amelioration of one's lot or improvement of one's character but a radical break with the past — escape from the world to be with God, escape from the flesh to live the life of the spirit.

Of course to the Gnostics salvation must be for the spirit only, not for the flesh. The flesh is necessarily and irremediably evil and only by being freed from it can a man attain the life of the spirit.³ At this point they were in complete agreement with Paul. Moreover, it was quite impossible for men to attain the life of the spirit of themselves. Power to leap the chasm separating the two worlds must come from above. Nobody can save himself; only God can save him. Here too they were at one with Paul.

It was natural that to men thinking as they did the gospel of Paul should appeal with tremendous power. The Christ whom he had proclaimed was just the saviour they needed — not a mere prophet, not a mere teacher of righteousness,

¹ Cf. Irenæus, *ibid.* I. 4 ff; 17; 24; 26.

² Cf. Irenæus, *ibid.* I. 5 : 6.

³ Cf. Irenæus, *ibid.* I. 24 : 5.

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not a Messiah who had come to establish the reign of God on earth, not the founder of a church or the leader of a religious crusade, but a divine being by mystical union with whom they might become partakers of the divine nature and return to the higher realm to which they belonged.

Already before the time of Christ the myth of a divine saviour existed within Gnostic circles. This myth was combined by the Gnostics we are speaking of with the figure of Christ. They identified him with one of the æons, usually with the highest of them, and taught that he had descended from above to rescue the spirits of men. He did not become a man himself; he was not born of a woman and did not suffer and die as Paul taught. Paul's interpretation of Christ's work as dying in the flesh and rising again in the Spirit was not theirs. So intimate a union of the divine Spirit with human flesh seemed incredible to them.

Opinions differed as to just what happened. All believed that the divine Christ appeared on earth, but some maintained that he associated himself with a real man Jesus upon whom he descended at baptism and whom he left again before the crucifixion; others that he had a heavenly not an earthly body which he brought down with him from above; others still that the human figure Jesus was a mere phantom, and that his career including both birth and death was appearance only not reality.¹ Whether their docetism was of this extreme type or of a milder sort, at any rate they all denied that the divine Christ had himself really become man. For such a degradation he was far too lofty a figure.

The Gnostics, as I have said, were primarily interested in salvation. It was their confirmed belief, however, that not

¹ For various examples of Gnostic Christology see Irenæus, *Adv. hæ.* I. 6:1; 7:2; 15:3; 24:4; 25:1; 26:1; 30:14; Hippolytus, *Philosophumena* VI. 30; VII. 20; VIII. 3.

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all human beings are capable of it. The mass of men have in addition to their bodies only animal souls and will perish as the animals perish. They have neither part nor lot in the life of the spiritual realm. But there are others (the Gnostics themselves) who possess a spark of the divine or a spiritual nature that has been implanted from above. It was to save such persons and only such that the divine Christ descended to earth. To reveal to them the way of life, to free them from the control of demons, to liberate them from the prison in which they were confined and to restore them to the higher world to which they belonged — this was the work of the Saviour.

In the course of controversy with their Christian opponents some of the Gnostics moderated the sharpness of their division between the two classes of men and recognized an intermediate class (the psychics) made up of ordinary Christians who might hope to enjoy through faith, supplemented by works, salvation of a lower sort.¹ Just what this meant is not clear. It represented a compromise and lacked both definiteness and conviction. As a matter of fact it did not really affect the general attitude of the Gnostics, which was aristocratic not democratic and denied salvation, at any rate in the full sense, to any but the elect.

According to Paul salvation is by faith, a mystical bond which unites a man to Christ, so that he dies with him unto the flesh and rises with him to a new life in the Spirit. According to the Gnostics the principal means of salvation is gnosis or knowledge. One of their favorite texts was the third verse of the seventeenth chapter of John: "This is life eternal to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou didst send." As to John so also to the Gnostics the word gnosis had a religious rather than a philosophical connotation. They employed it as a synonym of pneumatic

¹ Cf. Irenæus, *ibid.* I. 6 : 2 ; 7 : 5.

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or spiritual, and it meant not the mere intellectual apprehension of truth, the result of observation or reflection, but immediate vision, particularly the vision of God. It thus bore a genuinely mystical character.¹

Moreover, the knowledge about which the Gnostics were talking was supernatural in the sense that it was given by God, not achieved by man. Its correlative was revelation, apart from which it did not exist. God discloses himself to men; gives himself to be apprehended by them. Only thus can they know him with the knowledge that brings salvation. The whole thing is supernatural in the highest degree and moves in the sphere of religion not of philosophy. The knowledge of God may lead to conclusions about the world and man and many other things — from religion one may go on to philosophy, as the Gnostics did — and the term gnosticism may be broadened to include their philosophical speculations as it commonly is. But at bottom it is a religious conception we are dealing with. To be saved by knowledge meant to the Gnostics, as it has meant to many persons in other days as well as theirs, to be saved not by philosophy or learning or intellectual attainments of any kind, but by the vision of God and oneness with him.

This saving knowledge of God and union with him might be mediated, it was thought, by rites and ceremonies and sacraments upon which many of the Gnostics laid great emphasis.² Mysteries often of a very elaborate character had an important place in some of their systems. These mysteries not only mediated union with God but also purified from sin and imparted power to overcome the hindrances to the higher life and forward the journey of the soul to heaven.

¹ On the meaning of *gnosis* in the religious speech of the age see Reizenstein, *Agnostos Theos*, pp. 95 ff.

² Cf. Irenæus, *Adv. hæc.* I. 13.

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Salvation might also be promoted by conduct. Escape from the trammels of the material world depended in no small measure on one's treatment of the flesh and its temptations. To crucify and subdue the flesh by strict asceticism was one way to free oneself from its control and make possible the higher life of the spirit.¹ The asceticism which appeared in a mild form in Paul was carried much further by many of the Gnostics. It was the natural result of their dualism of spirit and matter and was by no means confined to them. Many others both within and without the church were ascetics but few as extreme as they.

Asceticism, however, was not the only sort of conduct recommended by the Gnostics. Some of them took the opposite tack and maintained that the control of the flesh may be broken by libertinism, by giving free rein to the passions, disregarding the ordinary conventions and laws of morality, and living beyond good and evil in a realm of perfect freedom.² This attitude naturally brought great disrepute not only on those who maintained it but on other Gnostics as well, all of them being held responsible by their opponents. The Fathers made the most of it and were never tired of denouncing the morals of the heretics and exposing their vices and evil practices. No doubt they greatly exaggerated; often the libertinism of the Gnostics carried them no further than the eating of meat offered to idols or similar breaches of the Christian conventions.³ Paul himself preached the principle of Christian freedom and was denounced as a libertine. Probably the evil reputation of the Gnostics was frequently no better founded. That

¹ Cf. Irenæus, *ibid.* I. 28 : 1.

² Cf. Irenæus, *ibid.* I. 6 : 3; 24 : 5; 28 : 2.

³ It is interesting that in all the passages referred to in the previous note Irenæus speaks both of eating meat offered to idols and of gross immorality as if they were equally reprehensible. The former was generally regarded as a species of idolatry, the worst of sins.

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some of them actually carried their principles to the length of immorality may well be, but this can hardly have been true of any large number. The Gnostic movement as a whole indeed was characterized not by over-freedom in the matter of morals but by extreme asceticism.

An important and significant feature of Gnosticism was its attitude toward Judaism and the Old Testament. Though, curiously enough, there were Jewish as well as Gentile Gnostics before the time of Christ, Gnosticism generally was decidedly hostile to Judaism. Its dualism was wholly opposed to Jewish monotheism and its estimate of the world was radically different from that of the Jews. Whereas according to the Jews the creation of the world was a good, according to the Gnostics it was an evil. The world as the latter believed was not made by God nor is it controlled or governed by him. It goes its own independent way and he has no responsibility for it and no interest in it except to rescue from it the spirits imprisoned therein. He is a saving not a creating God. Salvation is the antithesis of creation and represents its denial and defeat.

By some of the Gnostics the God of the Jews was rejected altogether, by others he was identified with the demiurge or world-creator. As such he was distinguished sharply from the supreme God and regarded as an inferior being who formed the world either in defiance of the will of God or in ignorance of it. In accordance with these principles the Old Testament, if recognized at all, was supposed to belong to the demiurge not to the supreme God, and to contain a revelation of the former not the latter. It might then be regarded as in the main a true historical record, as it was by many, but as a religious document of course it left much to be desired. Some of the Gnostics (for instance the Cainites and Apelles, a disciple of Marcion) denounced it in unsparing terms as wholly false and vicious. Others

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looked upon it as valuable in parts and as containing some religious truth.

The most interesting example of the latter attitude is found in an epistle to Flora, written by Ptolemy, a Valentinian Gnostic, soon after the middle of the second century.¹ A Christian woman named Flora had asked him for light upon the subject of the Mosaic law. If it did not come from the supreme God was it not necessary to ascribe it to some other God? Ptolemy replied that it is neither from the supreme God, as many thought, for its imperfections forbid this supposition; nor from the devil, as some supposed, for it condemns unrighteousness. On the contrary its author is the demiurge or world-creator who stands midway between the other two. The demiurge is righteous and is to be distinguished both from God who is good and from the devil who is evil. Part of the Mosaic law contains the higher spiritual law which Christ came to fulfil; part of it, a lower law, the law of vengeance or of retributive justice (an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth) which Christ abrogated; part of it, the ceremonial law which is made up of types and symbols of the higher spiritual law and is to be understood figuratively.

Ptolemy's treatment of the ceremonial law was identical with that of the author of the Epistle of Barnabas, of which I shall speak later. A similar method was applied by many of the Fathers to other parts of the Old Testament as well. They found difficulty not simply with the ceremonial law but with much else that was out of line with their Christian ideas. They were able to get rid of such uncongenial material by the simple expedient of interpreting it typically or allegorically. To them the allegorical method

¹ The epistle is found in Epiphanius, *Panarion* XXXIII. 3-7. Harnack gives a German translation of it and a detailed discussion in the *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*; (1902), No. XXV.

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was even more necessary than to the Gnostics, for they regarded the Old Testament throughout as a divine and authoritative book every part of which must be in harmony with the Christian revelation.

Though the Gnostics rejected the Old Testament in whole or in part they were not without authoritative religious documents. These they found in certain apostolic writings which circulated separately or were gathered into a canon. They were often interpreted allegorically, as the Old Testament was, and Gnostic ideas read into them. These apostolic writings were supplemented by oral traditions purporting to have been handed down secretly from Christ or the apostles and often containing Gnostic teaching in considerable detail. A good example of this is the *Pistis Sophia*, an Egyptian work of the third century, which is made up of conversations of Christ with his Apostles and other intimates. Thus the Gnostics sought to give their ideas apostolic authority or even the authority of Christ himself—a practice not confined to them, for pseudonymous works of alleged apostolic authorship together with apocryphal gospels and Acts were produced in considerable number during the early centuries.

Closely related to the Gnostics and by the Fathers always counted as one of them was Marcion, a wealthy shipmaster, son of the bishop of Sinope in Pontus. He came to Rome about 140 A.D. and attached himself to the church there.¹ Already before he reached Rome he seems to have become convinced that Christianity was generally misunderstood and that a reformation of the church was needed on the basis of the teaching of Paul, who alone of all the Apostles

¹ On Marcion see Harnack, *Marcion: das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* (1921). Our principal source for a knowledge of Marcion is Tertullian's work *Adversus Marcionem* in five books.

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had interpreted Christ correctly. For the gospel of the free grace of God and salvation by faith alone had been substituted, so Marcion believed, a legalism of a genuinely Jewish character with disastrous results both religious and moral. It was his desire to restore the original gospel in its purity and with this in view he devoted himself earnestly to the study of the epistles of Paul and other primitive Christian writings, as also of the Old Testament which seemed to him chiefly responsible for the mischief. After some time, hoping that he might win the church of Rome to his views, he laid them before his fellow-members, but they were horrified at his heresy and condemned and excommunicated him in the summer of 144 — a date celebrated by his followers as the birthday of the Marcionitic church. Because of his success in establishing a strong and independent church of his own Marcion was long regarded as the most dangerous of the heretics and he is denounced in unsparing terms in the anti-heretical works of the Fathers.

Having rejected the Old Testament Marcion felt the need of Christian Scriptures to take its place, for our New Testament had not yet been formed. He therefore constructed a Bible, the earliest Christian Bible so far as known to us, composed of a revised and expurgated edition of Luke's Gospel¹ and of ten epistles of Paul — all our canonical Pauline epistles except the Pastorals. The latter he seems to have omitted because they were not known to him as Paul's. The other ten he corrected freely whenever necessary to bring them into conformity with his interpretation of Paul's teaching. He did this doubtless in perfect good faith, sincerely believing that both gospel and epistles had been corrupted in the interest of the Jewish legalism which he was determined to root out.

¹ He understood Paul's words in Gal. 1 : 8 to refer to a written gospel.

He wrote an important book known as *The Antitheses*,¹ which is no longer extant, but can be reconstructed in part from Tertullian's reply to it in his work against Marcion. In *The Antithesis* Marcion set out in detail and discussed at length the contradictions between the law and the gospel and between the God of the Jews and the God of the Christians. He did not base his work on divine inspiration nor did he claim to have received a revelation of his own. He wished only to reproduce as clearly and as simply as he could the gospel of Christ and of Paul who was the only genuine apostle and whose teaching he believed agreed completely with the Saviour's.

Central with Marcion as with Paul was the doctrine of salvation by the free grace of God, through faith and not through works. God is a being of pure love and mercy, a saviour only not a judge. He punishes no one but relies solely on the persuasive power of love. Fear and slavish obedience are alike distasteful to him. He desires only that men shall trust him absolutely and shall be moved in all they do by love for the God who loves and saves them.

Conceiving of God as he did Marcion found it impossible to believe that he was the creator of the world with all its evils. "This one work is sufficient for our God," he says, "that he has delivered man by his supreme and extraordinary goodness."² And so he followed the Gnostics in distinguishing him from the demiurge or world-creator who was a being of an entirely different character. The latter was the God of the Jews, depicted in the Old Testament, and he was not only the creator of the world but also a law-giver and judge who rewarded the obedient and punished the disobedient, who in fact was as unlike as possible to the God whom Marcion worshipped. Marcion's God was a

¹ It was later included by his followers in their canon of Scripture.

² Tertullian, *Adv. Marcionem*, I. 1.

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Saviour God whose realm is not this material world but an invisible world of the spirit. The God of this world is far inferior to him but is ignorant of his existence and has set himself up as supreme.

The contrast between Marcion's God and the God of the Jews was not primarily the contrast between a good and a bad God as in the dualism of the Persian religion. To be sure Marcion often spoke of the God of the Old Testament as evil. He showed unfairness in choosing the Jews and neglecting all other peoples; he was a god of war and war is one of the worst of wrongs; he was often cruel, revengeful and untruthful. His infirmities too Marcion liked to emphasize: his fondness for animal sacrifices, his susceptibility to flattery, his changeableness, the limitations of his knowledge.¹ But in spite of all this the fundamental contrast between the creating and the redeeming God was that between justice and love, law and gospel. To substitute gospel for law and the worship of the Saviour for the worship of the lawgiver and judge was Marcion's principal concern. He had to endure taunts not unlike those hurled against Paul: If men have nothing to fear from God why should they not give themselves up to wickedness? And he replied as Paul did with a similar lofty disdain, "God forbid."²

According to Marcion the world was created out of evil matter and is an evil not a good world. Men need saving as well from the world in which they live as from the God who made both it and them. The redeeming God reveals the greatness of his love in that he saves not those already belonging to him — spiritual natures that have come from above as the Gnostics taught — but total strangers on whom he has compassion because of the evils with which

¹ Cf. Irenæus, *Adv. hæc.* I. 27 : 2; also the Clementine *Homilies* II. 43-44 where the author probably had Marcion's *Antitheses* in mind (cf. Harnack, *Marcion*, p. 102).

² See Tertullian, *Adv. Marcionem*, 1 : 27.

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they are beset, and on whom he freely bestows the gift of eternal life. It is not because of anything in them that he does this, and not as a reward for their goodness or for their achievements of any kind, but of his own love and mercy. Salvation is free to all, not merely to the elect or to those that are spiritually endowed. God would gladly save all men if he could ; he asks only that they shall have faith and put their trust in him.

The supreme God was wholly unknown not only to the demiurge but to all the world until in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Christ suddenly appeared proclaiming salvation. This Christ was the son of the supreme God and so completely one with him that Marcion drew no distinction between them but often spoke of Christ without more ado as if he were himself the God whom he revealed.

Like the Gnostics Marcion denied that Christ became a real man. He was too lofty to be confined within the prison of the flesh. Marcion's docetism was of the extremest sort. Christ's body, he maintained, was only a phantom. He was not born of a woman but appeared suddenly in Palestine a full-grown man, nor did he really die on the cross or rise again from the tomb. When his work on earth was over he preached to the dead in Hades and then returned to the Father from whom he came. In answer to the accusation that in saving souls who belonged not to him but to the demiurge who made them, Christ was robbing the latter of his possessions, Marcion is said to have replied that by his death on the cross, Christ paid a price to the demiurge for those he was to save.¹ Just how he reconciled this with his denial that Christ was a real man does not appear. It may be that his docetism was not as extreme as the Fathers thought, though this is difficult to believe in view of his general conception of the flesh. It is perhaps more probable

¹ See Harnack, *Marcion*, p. III.

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that the payment of a price to the demiurge was only a passing suggestion on Marcion's part and does not represent his reasoned opinion.

Believing as he did in the evil of the flesh Marcion was a thoroughgoing ascetic, carrying his asceticism so far as to condemn marriage and insist not only on chastity but also on complete celibacy for all his followers. To procreate the human race was to multiply the subjects of the demiurge and serve his interests. It was therefore doubly wrong. In spite of his strictness at this point, which meant that his movement could legitimately grow only by propaganda, the number of his disciples increased rapidly and his church spread widely and lasted for several centuries.

For a generation and more it has been the fashion to deny that Marcion was a Gnostic, as he was called by the Fathers and as he was supposed to have been by all historians until recent times. As long as the Gnostics were thought of as speculative theologians there was good ground for distinguishing Marcion from them, for his interest was certainly not speculative. But now that we have come to recognize that the interest of the Gnostics was as a rule primarily religious and practical, as Marcion's was, the reason for denying that he was a Gnostic is less apparent. Certainly he agreed with the Gnostics in many respects. His dualism ; his recognition of two gods, the world creator and the supreme God ; his identification of the former with the God of the Jews, and his complete rejection of the Old Testament ; his assertion that Christ came not from the creating God but from the supreme God ; his docetism, his asceticism, and his denial of the salvation of the flesh — all these were genuinely Gnostic.

On the other hand Marcion's teaching was entirely lacking in the mythological elements of Gnosticism ; he had no doctrine of æons, and he made no use of mysteries and secret

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rites. Indeed he was not a mystic in any sense. Moreover he was democratic in his doctrine of redemption not aristocratic as the Gnostics were, and above all he insisted that salvation was by faith alone and not by knowledge. His agreements with the Gnostics, as a matter of fact, seem to have been due not so much to a community of interest as to the adoption of certain of their ideas which helped to explain and confirm his own position. According to tradition he was a disciple of the Gnostic Cerdo in Rome and he may well have learned from him to buttress Paul's ethical dualism of spirit and flesh with the ontological dualism of spirit and matter, to separate the creating from the redeeming God, and to identify the former with the God of the Old Testament. Quite apart from the Gnostics there were probably many Gentile Christians who had accepted Christ without accepting the God of the Jews,¹ so that Marcion's rejection of the latter was no innovation and does not need Gnosticism to account for it; but the identification of the God of the Jews with the creator of the world and the conclusions drawn therefrom were almost certainly due to Gnostic influence.²

The question whether Marcion is to be regarded as a Gnostic is largely verbal and is of little importance in view of the elastic character of the word. But it is important to recognize that whether he was a Gnostic or not he was a unique figure in the history of the early church, with a gospel of his own as unlike that of most Gnostics as it was unlike that of the Christians in general. He and the Gnostics were Paulinists in an un-Pauline age, but whereas he made central salvation by the free grace of God through faith

¹ See my *God of the Early Christians*, chap. II.

² Marcion's identification of the God of the Jews with the creator of the world was unfortunate. It distracted attention from his gospel of salvation which was the only thing that really interested him, and obscured the significance of his attempted reformation.

alone, they made central salvation by mystical union with the divine, a union to be brought about by the vision of God. For all his insistence on Paulinism Marcion was farther from Paul than the Gnostics in one very important respect. Paul and the Gnostics were thoroughgoing mystics in their conception of salvation and the way of salvation while Marcion was not. Though he made faith the only condition of salvation, as Paul did, faith as he interpreted it lacked the mystical significance which knowledge possessed in the thought of the Gnostics. They were more truly in the succession of Paul, John and Ignatius than Marcion was for all his Pauline language.²

But even so the teaching of Marcion was a phenomenon of the greatest interest and significance. Not that it had influence on the thought of the church at large, except by way of reaction, but that in it there was set forth with a simplicity and fearlessness not approached again until modern times the gospel of salvation, unlimited and unobscured by the preaching of divine judgment and punishment. In it too there was exhibited a tremendous faith in the power of love unmatched in most ages of the church. Marcion's great strength was his gift for concentration and simplification. Perhaps the most patent difference between him and the Gnostics lay just here, for they were syncretists on an enormous scale and simplicity is the last attribute that could be ascribed to their teaching.

Throughout this chapter I have emphasized the kinship of the Gnostics and Marcion with Paul. But it is well to recur before turning from them to the many differences between them. For though they were nearer Paul in certain fundamental matters than their Christian contempora-

¹ According to Paul and the Gnostics, salvation is due to the indwelling divine; but there is no suggestion of this in Marcion.

² It is only because among Protestants Paul's thought has been so widely identified with Luther's that this has been commonly overlooked.

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ries, they were so far from him at other points that he could not possibly have counted them his true disciples. Their separation of the God of redemption from the God of creation and their recognition of the latter as an inferior being must have appeared blasphemous to him, and their rejection of the Old Testament, though it seemed but a short step beyond his rejection of the Jewish law, could have offended him hardly less. Their denial of the resurrection of the flesh of course he would have approved, but their asceticism he would have found too extreme and their docetism he must have condemned, for it meant a radical revision of his theory of salvation. Fundamentally the difference between them was due to the fact that his background was Jewish while theirs was not. Influenced as he was in no small degree by Hellenistic thought he yet remained a Jew and his Christianity retained always certain elements of the ancient faith which theirs wholly lacked.

CHAPTER V

THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

IN addition to the idea of Christianity as a mystical religion of redemption, which was shared by Paul, John, Ignatius and the Gnostics, another view was current in the late first and early second centuries, much more widely current indeed than that already traced. Our sources for a knowledge of it are many and varied. They include both the later writings of the New Testament and the so-called Apostolic Fathers. Among the former are the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Pastoral Epistles, the Epistles of James, Peter and Jude, and the Apocalypse of John. The Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts are also witnesses to the prevalence of this type of Christianity, reflecting as they do the ideas of their authors.¹

Besides the epistles of Ignatius, who stands in a class by himself and has already been considered, the writings of the Apostolic Fathers embrace a letter sent by the church of Rome to the church of Corinth about 95 A.D., commonly called First Clement; a homily of the second century also belonging to Rome and known as Second Clement; the Shepherd, an apocalyptic work by Hermas, a Roman Christian of the same century; and from the east a letter to the Philippians written by Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, not far from 120 A.D.; the Martyrdom of Polycarp, an account of his martyrdom sent by the church of Smyrna to

¹ All these New Testament writings are dealt with in works on N. T. theology and have been discussed in my *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*. I shall therefore pass them by here with no more than a cursory mention.

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the church of Philomelium some thirty years later ; the so-called Epistle of Barnabas, an anonymous tract of uncertain date, dealing with the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament ; and a brief manual of instruction entitled Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (or Didache), which belongs perhaps to Syria and to the early part of the second century.¹

While most of the writings I have mentioned were by Gentile Christians, some of them, for instance Hebrews, James and the Apocalypse of John, were by Christians of Jewish birth. But they were all one in recognizing that Christianity was an independent religion not a Jewish sect, that it was a religion of personal salvation not a Messianic movement, and that Christians were entirely free from the obligation to submit to circumcision and to observe the Jewish law. In other words whether Jews or Gentiles by birth they belonged to the main body of the church which was made up principally of Gentile Christians, and they are to be distinguished from those commonly known as Jewish Christians who insisted on the observance of the Jewish law and went their separate way until they finally disappeared altogether.

In spite of a wide variety in interest and emphasis, the writings with which we have to do in this chapter all represent the same general type of Christianity, a type very different from Paul's. They agreed with him not only in the matters referred to just above but also in recognizing the God of the Jews as their God and the Jewish Scriptures as their Scriptures. But whereas to him Christianity appeared under the guise of a mystery-religion, in which salvation is secured by union with a dying and risen Lord, to them it appeared rather as a moral system based on divine sanctions, a religion

¹ Additional sources for this chapter are the extant fragments of Papias, of the *Kerygma Petri*, of the Apocalypse of Peter, and the quotations from an anonymous elder in Irenæus' *Adv. hæ.*

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similar to the Judaism of the dispersion but stripped of all racial and national features. It was as a law that these Christians chiefly thought of Christianity. Of Paul's notion of Christian liberty there is no trace in their writings. The author of the Epistle of James, to be sure, speaks of a "law of liberty," but this was altogether different from Paul's liberty from law. At most it meant that under the law of liberty men are judged mercifully.

The Christian law according to all these writers is divine not mere natural law. It came from God, the creator and ruler of the world, who was also the God of the Jews and the giver of the Jewish law. It is not an accident, therefore, that like the Old Testament writers they emphasized the power of God as well as his righteousness and justice.¹ The proper attitude toward God, who is both lawgiver and judge, is fear. As Hermas put it at the very beginning of the Mandates (the second part of the Shepherd)²: "Believe in him therefore and fear him and fearing him be continent."³

The law not only came from God but it rests upon divine sanctions. He that obeys the law will inherit eternal life; he that disobeys will suffer eternal punishment. Upon this the greatest emphasis was laid. The expectation of the divine judgment was kept constantly in mind. As the Epistle of Barnabas expresses it: "It is well to learn the ordinances of the Lord, as many as have been written, and to walk in them. For he who does these things shall be glorified in the

¹ Cf. *Did.* 10 : 4 "Above all we give thee thanks that thou art powerful." Cf. also 1 Clem. 27 : 1-2; Barnabas 4 : 12; Hermas, *Sim.* VI. 3 : 6.

² The *Shepherd* is divided into three parts: *Visions, Mandates, Similitudes.*

³ *Mand.* I; cf. 1 Peter 2 : 17; 1 Clem. 28 : 1; 2 Clem. 4 : 4; *Did.* 4 : 10; Barn. 10 : 10. In the *Didache* 1 : 2 it is said, "The way of life is this: first thou shalt love the God who made thee, secondly thy neighbor as thyself"; and in the parallel passage in Barnabas (19 : 2) "Thou shalt love him that made thee; thou shalt fear him that formed thee; thou shalt glorify him that redeemed thee from death." But apart from these passages love for God is rarely referred to in the writings we are dealing with, apparently only in Polycarp 3 : 3; in 1 Clem. 29 : 1; 59 : 3 and possibly 49 : 2, 5.

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kingdom of God; while he who chooses the others shall perish together with his works. For this reason there is a resurrection, for this reason a recompense.”¹ And according to Second Clement: “If we do the will of Christ we shall find rest; but if not nothing shall deliver us from eternal punishment, if we disregard his commandments.”²

The Christian law is not only a divine law, it is also divinely revealed. Its author is God, its revealer and the revealer of the divine sanctions attached to it is Jesus Christ.³ It is therefore spoken of indifferently as the law of God or the law of the Lord, that is Christ.⁴

Christ's relation to the law was not confined to the giving of it; he was also thought of as judge. In fact he is frequently so called in the writings we are dealing with. That God too was spoken of as judge involved no inconsistency, for Christ was thought of as God's agent in judging men as well as in giving the law.⁵ The judgment therefore might be spoken of either as God's or Christ's. But this meant that Christ was thought of as a divine being. The words of Second Clement are very significant in this connection, “Brethren we must think of Jesus Christ as of God (*ὡς περὶ θεοῦ*), as of a judge of living and dead, and we must not think little of our salvation, for if we think little of him we can hope to obtain little.”⁶ As a matter of fact all the writers we are dealing with believed that Christ was divine. He is called Kyrios, or Lord, in all the writings except the Epistle to Titus,⁷ in some of them also Theos,

¹ Barn. 21: 1-2; cf. 4: 12.

² 2 Clem. 6: 7.

³ Cf. Hermas, *Sim.* V. 6: 3.

⁴ Cf. 2 Clem. 8: 4; Barn. 2: 6; Hermas, *Sim.* VI. 1.

⁵ Cf. Acts 17: 31 and see my *Apostles' Creed*, p. 142.

⁶ 2 Clem. 1: 1-2. Throughout 2 Clem. the same functions are ascribed indifferently to God and to Christ, and the two are spoken of as if they were to all intents and purposes identical.

⁷ As Christ is called *Kύριος* in the other pastoral epistles the omission of the title in Titus was evidently accidental.

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but the one name as well as the other signified that he was thought of as divine.¹

Probably many early Christians of Gentile birth believed in no other God and had no interest in any other. He was their Saviour and Lord and they desired none besides. But the influence of Judaism, promoted by the Christian missionaries of Jewish birth, Paul and others, and by the presence in the church of many Jews either native or proselyte, made for the acceptance of the Jewish God as did also the desire to give Christianity universal significance that it might not be inferior to the Judaism from which it had sprung.² All these early writers represented this position. They all recognized Christ as a divine being, but they also accepted the God of the Jews as the supreme God, the creator of heaven and earth, and they commonly spoke of Christ as the Son of God, as Paul had done.³

As a divine being Christ was naturally thought of as existing before his appearance on earth. In Second Clement he is referred to as being at first spirit and then becoming flesh.⁴ And in the Shepherd of Hermas we have the following striking passage: "First of all, Sir, I said, tell me this, The rock and the door, what is it? This rock and door, he said, is the Son of God. How Sir, I said, is the rock ancient but the door new? Hear, he said, foolish man, and understand. The Son of God is older than all his creation, so that he became the Father's counsellor in his creation; therefore the rock is ancient. But why, Sir, I said, is the gate

¹ See my *God of the Early Christians*, p. 42.

² See *ibid.* chap. 2.

³ He is called the Son of God in most of the writings of the N. T. and in all the Apostolic Fathers except 2 Clem. and Polycarp. The omission of the title in 2 Clem. may have been intentional for the author was interested to magnify Christ, but in the other cases it was probably accidental. Hermas uses the title Son of God for the preëxistent Spirit who appeared in Christ, but generally the title in the writings we are dealing with was used for the historic figure Jesus Christ himself.

⁴ 2 Clem. 9 : 5 ; cf. 14 : 2 ; also Barn. 5 : 5.

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new? Because, he said, he was made manifest in the last days of the consummation; therefore the gate was made new that those who are to be saved may enter through it into the Kingdom of God.”¹ In another passage Hermas says: “The holy preëxistent Spirit which created the whole creation, God made to dwell in flesh that he desired.”² And elsewhere he identifies the Spirit with the Son of God.³

The Christian law, the new law as Barnabas calls it in distinction from the old Jewish law,⁴ might be learned from the Jewish Scriptures, from the words of Christ, from the Apostles, and from the Holy Spirit present in the church. The Jewish Scriptures were regarded by these Christians as their own, not simply because they contained types and prophecies of Christ and Christianity but also because Christ himself was supposed to have spoken in them.⁵ It was taken for granted that they were divinely inspired and taught the will and truth of God. Thus it is said in First Clement, “You have searched the Holy Scriptures which are true and were given through the Holy Spirit. You know that nothing unrighteous or false is written in them.”⁶

¹ Hermas, *Sim.* IX. 12 : 1-3.

² *Ibid.* V. 6 : 5.

³ *Ibid.* IX. 1 : 1. In the light of these passages I am convinced, in agreement with Loofs (*Dogmengeschichte*⁴, p. 95), that Hermas believed in the preëxistence of Christ as the two Clements and Barnabas and others did. This, however, Harnack (*Dogmengeschichte*⁴, I. 211) denies. He regards Hermas as a representative of what he calls the adoptionist Christology according to which Christ was a mere man who was adopted by God as his Son and endowed with his Spirit at baptism. This conclusion Harnack bases on Hermas' reference (in the second passage quoted above) to the flesh in which God made the Holy Spirit dwell. But this must be read in the light of the earlier passage where it is stated explicitly that the Son of God though ancient became manifest in the last days, and that through him men are to enter the Kingdom. That is the preëxistent Son of God is identified with Christ. In view of this the words “the Holy Spirit which God made to dwell in flesh” are to be interpreted not as representing a different Christology but simply as putting the same thing in a different form.

⁴ Barn. 2 : 6.

⁵ Cf. 1 Pet. 1 : 11 ; 1 Clem. 22 : 1 ; 2 Clem. 3 : 5.

⁶ 1 Clem. 45.

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It is significant that the Corinthian Christians to whom these words were addressed were Gentiles, at least in the main. It was not because they were Jews that they knew the Scriptures but because they were Christians. The Scriptures were emphasized both for their types and prophecies and also for their moral and religious instruction. They constituted indeed, in the period we are dealing with, the Christian's only Bible. The authoritative canon of Christian books which we know as the New Testament was of later growth.

The Christian law, or the will of God for the followers of Christ, was to be learned also from the words of Christ himself, which are quoted frequently at least in some of the writings we are concerned with here. His words were taken as a rule from one or another of our Gospels, but Second Clément quotes also from an unknown document, perhaps the so-called Gospel of the Egyptians,¹ and the elders referred to by Irenæus drew their knowledge of Christ's words from oral tradition.² Papias indeed even preferred oral tradition to written records.³ In one passage words of Christ are quoted as "Scripture" (*γραφῆ*)⁴ but their authority was due not to the fact that they were written in a gospel or gospels, but that they were spoken by him.

The teachings of the apostles were also regarded as authoritative. Thus Clement says: "The apostles received the gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus the Christ was sent forth from God. The Christ then is from God and the apostles from the Christ. Both therefore came of the will of God in the appointed order."⁵ The apostles were missionaries who were supposed to be divinely called and inspired for their task and there were many of them in the early church. But gradually the name came to be

¹ 2 Clem. 12 : 2.

³ Quoted by Eusebius, *H. E.* III. 39.

⁵ 1 Clem. 42.

² Cf. Irenæus, *Adv. hæ.* V. 33 : 3.

⁴ 2 Clem. 2 : 4.

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confined to the Twelve and Paul and already in our period was frequently used in the narrower sense though not as yet to the exclusion of the broader meaning. There was little or no knowledge in this period of the personality and work of any of the Twelve beyond what we have in the Gospels and Acts and in the epistles of Paul. Peter and Paul are referred to both by Clement and Ignatius, and the former reports that they endured many trials and finally suffered martyrdom,¹ but that is all. The dogmatic theory of the apostolate as an authoritative and limited body appointed by Christ and entrusted with the founding of the church and the formulation of its faith was not yet complete, but it was in process of growth. Paul himself contributed to it when he insisted that his commission and authority were equal to that of the Twelve, and in First Clement and particularly in Ignatius the theory finds more or less explicit expression. The Didache is entitled Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, but in chapter eleven the word apostles is used in the broader sense of contemporary missionaries who are still travelling among the churches.

Again it was believed that the will of God was to be learned from the Holy Spirit present in the church. As in earlier days, there were still Christian prophets who were supposed to be living mouthpieces of the Spirit, as the prophets of the old dispensation had been his mouthpieces in the days before Christ.² To these present-day prophets Christians also looked for instruction and guidance. Hermas of Rome was such a prophet, for he claimed to have received a series of revelations which he recorded in the Shepherd, and the work had for some time, at least in certain quarters, the authority of Scripture.

¹ 1 Clem. 5.

² Cf. *Did.* 11; 13; 15; Hermas, *Mand.* XI; and see my *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, pp. 526 ff.

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The belief that there were still prophets in the church inspired by the Spirit to declare the will and truth of God gradually disappeared as a result of abuses. Both Hermas and the author of the Didache found it necessary to warn their readers against false prophets and to give tests by which to distinguish the false from the true. "How then, Sir, said I, shall a man know which of them is a prophet and which a false prophet? Hear, he said, concerning both the prophets, and as I am about to tell you so you shall test the prophet and the false prophet. Test the man who has the divine Spirit by his life. In the first place he that has the spirit from above is meek and gentle and humble-minded and abstains from every wickedness and vain desire of this age and makes himself less than all men and answers no one when inquired of, nor speaks by himself in solitude. Neither does the Holy Spirit speak when a man wishes to speak, but speaks then when God wishes him to speak. When therefore the man who has the divine Spirit enters a gathering of righteous men who have faith in a divine Spirit and a petition is offered to God by the gathering, then the angel of the prophetic spirit who is with him fills the man and being filled with the Holy Spirit he speaks to the multitude as the Lord wills. Thus then the spirit of the deity shall be manifest. So great is the power of the Lord touching the spirit of the deity. Hear now, he said, concerning the earthly and vain spirit which has no power but is foolish. In the first place the man who seems to have a spirit exalts himself and wishes to have the first seat, and straightway is reckless and shameless and talkative, and lives among many luxuries and other deceits and receives payment for his prophesying, and if he is not paid he does not prophesy. Is it then possible for a divine spirit to receive money and prophesy? It is not permitted a prophet of God to do this, but the spirit of such prophets is earthly. In the next place

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he never approaches a gathering of righteous men, but avoids them and cleaves to the double-minded and empty, and prophesies to them in a corner, and in all things deceives them with empty speech according to their desires, for he is answering the empty. For the empty vessel which is put with other empty ones is not broken, but they agree with one another. But when he cometh into a gathering full of righteous men who have a divine spirit, and prayer is offered by them, that man is emptied, and the earthly spirit flees from him in fear, and he is struck dumb and is altogether broken to pieces, being unable to say anything. . . . You have the life of both kinds of prophets. Test therefore by his works and his life the man who says he is inspired." ¹

Some years earlier, at the time First Clement was written, travelling prophets, against whose character apparently there was nothing to urge, were nevertheless making trouble and stirring up strife in the church of Corinth, and in opposition to them the author of the letter emphasized the authority of the regular officials of the church to whom the prophets like all other Christians must be subject. The influence of this in promoting the organization of the church was not inconsiderable.²

The duties required of Christians according to our sources were both religious and moral. The Christian law was a divine law and inculcated worship of God, as well as obedience to him. But of methods of worship very little is said. It was believed that the law of the Jews with all its religious ceremonies, its ritual requirements, its feasts and fasts and dietary rules had ceased to be binding on Christians, and they had nothing as yet to take its place. The Didache contains directions concerning baptism, the eucharist, the

¹ Hermas, *Mand.* XI: 7-16; cf. *Did.* 11.

² See my *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age*, pp. 667 ff.

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Lord's day and weekly fast days. It also enjoins the repetition of the Lord's Prayer thrice daily, and gives a couple of formal prayers for use in connection with the eucharist. But all this is very primitive.

The moral conduct demanded by these writers was conduct appropriate to citizenship in another world. It was believed that the Christians were an elect people of God, chosen from among the peoples of the earth to be his own peculiar possession. "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession," it is said in First Peter,¹ and First Clement speaks of the all-seeing God who "chose the Lord Jesus Christ and us through him for a peculiar people."² According to Second Clement the church was created before the sun and moon, and according to Hermas the world was made for the sake of the church.³ This sense of being God's own peculiar people supplied a powerful motive for righteousness. To live worthily of their calling, and as befitted the chosen of God, might well seem to not a few the highest of ambitions.

In many passages the belief appears that the Christians have supplanted the Jewish people in the divine favor, that they are the true heirs of the covenant made with Israel or that a new and better covenant has been given them.⁴ As the elect people of God the Christians were heirs of the kingdom, citizens of another world than this, and their lives must be lived so as to fit them for life there. What this was understood to mean is interestingly set forth in the Shepherd: "Ye know that ye, who are the servants of God, are dwelling in a foreign land; for your city is far from this city. If ye

¹ 1 Peter 2 : 9; cf. Hebrews 3 : 1 and Titus 2 : 14.

² 1 Clem. 64; cf. also 29, 30, and Barn. 3 : 6. The Christians are frequently called the elect. Cf. 1 Clem. 58 : 2; 59 : 2; 2 Clem. 14 : 5; Hermas, *Vis.* II. 2 : 5; Mart. of Pol. 22.

³ 2 Clem. 14 : 1; Hermas, *Vis.* I. 1 : 6; II. 4 : 1.

⁴ Cf. Barn. 4 : 6-8; 13 : 1; 14 : 1.

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then know your city, in which ye are going to dwell, why do ye here prepare fields and expensive displays and buildings and superfluous dwellings? He that preparereth these things for this city does not purpose to return to his own city. O foolish and double-minded and miserable man, perceivest thou not that all these things are foreign and under the power of another? For the lord of this city will say, 'I do not wish thee to dwell in my city; go forth from this city, for thou dost not conform to my laws.' Thou, therefore, who hast fields and dwellings and many other possessions, when thou art cast out by him, what wilt thou do with thy field and thy house and all the other things that thou hast prepared for thyself? For the lord of this country saith to thee justly, 'Either conform to my laws or depart from my country.' . . . Take heed therefore, as dwelling in a strange land prepare nothing more for thyself than a sufficient competency, and be ready that, whenever the master of this city desires to cast thee out for thine opposition to his law, thou mayest go forth from his city and depart into thine own city, and follow thine own law joyfully and without insult. Take heed therefore, ye that serve the Lord and have him in your heart; work the works of God being mindful of his commandments and of the promises which he made, and believe him that he will perform them, if his commandments be kept. Therefore, instead of fields buy ye souls that are in trouble, as each is able, and visit widows and orphans, and neglect them not; and spend your riches and all the establishments which ye have received from God on fields and houses of this kind. For to this end the Master enriched you, that ye might perform these ministrations for him. It is much better to purchase fields and possessions and houses of this kind, which thou wilt find in thine own city when thou visitest it."¹

The attitude of detachment, fostered by the consciousness

¹ *Hermas, Sim. I.*

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of belonging to another world instead of this, was strengthened by the belief in the speedy return of Christ when the present order of things would be done away. It was strengthened also by the common notion that this world is evil and corrupting in its influence. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God," according to the Epistle of James, and the author of First John declares, "If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him."¹ The author of Second Clement after quoting the words of Jesus, "No man can serve two masters" and "What profit is it if one gain the whole world and lose one's own soul?" continues: "Now this age and the future are enemies. The one speaks of adultery and corruption and avarice and deceit, the other bids these things farewell. We cannot therefore be friends of both, but must bid farewell to the one and hold companionship with the other. We reckon that it is better to hate the things that are here, for they are small and short-lived and corruptible, and to love the things that are there, for they are good and incorruptible."²

The ideal was less to live as good citizens of the state, as good husbands, parents, neighbors, tradesmen and the like, than as heirs of heaven, where all such relationships are done away.³ There was no thought of trying to reform the world. To escape from it rather than to make it better was the aim. The attitude was similar to that of the Gnostics but not so extreme, for it was not due to the belief in a radical dualism between matter and spirit as theirs was.

There was another side to this separation from the world and that was the brotherhood of Christians. As the chosen people of God they were to live as far as possible apart

¹ Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15.

² 2 Clem. 6; cf. *Hermas*, *Vis.* IV. 3.

³ There is less of this spirit in 1 Clement than in some of the other writings. In general the author represents a more normal and less ascetic type of piety.

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from the world; but that meant that they were to live in intimate association with each other. Upon this constant emphasis was laid. The importance of meeting together frequently and regularly for religious services was stressed by some, and even more the importance of brotherly love,¹ which was to be manifested in all sorts of ways, in hospitality, charity, mutual forbearance, forgiveness, kindness, helpfulness and the like. Love is emphasized over and over again in the writings we are dealing with. It occurs in all the lists of virtues, and is often spoken of as if it were the characteristic Christian virtue.² The two-fold ideal was well summed up in the Epistle of James, "This is pure religion and undefiled, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."³

I have been speaking of Christianity as a law, but it was not only a law, it was also a way of salvation. Indeed the law was given with salvation in view. According to Hermas, the commandments are "beautiful and powerful and glad-some and glorious and able to save a man's soul."⁴ The keeping of the law was the indispensable and sufficient condition of salvation. Upon this all were agreed.⁵

The keeping of the law naturally presupposed repentance on the part of those who had not always kept it or had kept it only imperfectly, and hence we find repentance frequently referred to. Offenders must also be forgiven by God if they were to be saved. Christians were not singular in recogniz-

¹ The words of 1 Peter 2:17 are interesting in this connection: "Honour all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the king." Cf. Hermas, *Mand.* VIII. 9.

² Cf. e.g. 1 Clem. 62; Hermas, *Vis.* III. 8; *Mand.* VIII. 9; *Sim.* IX. 15:2; Barn. 9:7; 21:9.

³ Jas. 1:27.

⁴ *Sim.* VI. 1:1.

⁵ Cf. e.g. 1 Clem. 58; 2 Clem. 4, 7, 10, 13 ff.; Pol. 2; Hermas, *Mand.* VIII. 6, 11 ff. The contrast with Paul at this point is very noticeable.

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ing the need of divine forgiveness. Not only among the Jews but also among the Greeks, Babylonians, and other ancient peoples, it was assumed as a matter of course, and purifications and expiations were an important part of their religious practices. The Christians we are dealing with here did not go beyond others at this point. Nor is there evidence that their conception of sin was more profound or searching. They seem to have had no such vivid sense of sin as Paul had, and they certainly did not share the belief in the radical badness of man as man and in his utter inability to be good until made over by God.

And yet though their interpretation of sin was largely traditional and conventional they took the matter seriously, and were sure that unless repented of and forgiven by God a man's sins (for they thought in terms of particular offenses rather than of a general state or *habitus*) made salvation quite impossible. It was the common belief that upon beginning the Christian life the convert was pardoned for all his past sins and was thus enabled to start afresh with a clean record. But it seems to have been taken for granted that thereafter he would so live as to need no forgiveness. And some at any rate believed that if he fell again into sin there was no farther help for him. The Christian was judged more severely than other men. For them there might be forgiveness but not for him after he had once been baptized. As *Hermas* put it: "I have heard, Sir, said I, from some teachers that there is no other repentance save the one when we went down into the water and received remission of our former sins. You have heard rightly, he said to me, for so it is. For he who has received remission of sins ought not to sin again but to abide in holiness."¹

Evidently, as a result of this rigorous teaching, many Christians had fallen into despair and had ceased trying

¹ *Hermas*, *Mand.* IV. 3.

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to live Christianly. It was to this situation that Hermas addressed himself. On the authority of a divine revelation he promised those who had fallen a second opportunity. If they repented they would be pardoned and allowed another chance, not however to be repeated. "After you have made known to them all these words which the Master commanded that I should reveal to you, all their sins which they have formerly committed shall be forgiven, and they shall be forgiven to all the saints that have sinned up to this day; if they repent with their whole heart and cast out double mindedness from their heart. For the Master has sworn to his elect by his own glory that if there still be sin after this day has been fixed they shall have no salvation; for repentance for the righteous has an end. The days of repentance have been fulfilled for all the saints; for the heathen there is repentance until the last day." ¹

The forgiveness promised by the Shepherd was conditioned not on repentance alone but on continued righteousness. "If you turn unto the Lord with your whole heart and live righteously the remaining days of your life and serve him faithfully according to his will he will give healing to your former sins and you shall have power to conquer the works of the devil." ² Penance also was demanded by the Shepherd. "See Sir, said I, they have repented with their whole heart. I too know, he said, that they have repented with their whole heart. But do you think that the sins of those who repent are straightway forgiven? By no means. He who repents must torture his soul and be humble in every deed and be afflicted with divers kinds of afflictions. And if he endure the afflictions which come upon him, the one who created all things and gave them power will surely have compassion on him and will give him some remedy whenever

¹ Hermas, *Vis.* II. 2.

² *Mand.* XII. 6 : 2; cf. IV. 4 : 4.

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he sees that the heart of the penitent is pure from every evil deed." ¹

The notion that in Christianity there is free and full and repeated forgiveness was not the notion of these early Christians. They were true to Christ and Paul in emphasizing righteousness rather than forgiveness. And like them they were interested in moral reformation rather than in the assurance of pardon for those who sinned. Moral rigor, not leniency, was the dominant note in this period.

In addition to repentance and the keeping of the law, baptism was also a condition of salvation. In our sources the only explicit statements of the dependence of salvation on baptism are found in the appendix to the Gospel of Mark and in *Hermas*.² And it would probably be going too far to say that it was universally believed that no one could be saved without it. But as the regular rite of entrance into the Christian circle it was doubtless generally taken for granted. It should be remarked that there is nowhere a trace of any sacramental or mystical significance attaching to it as in Paul — an illustration of the contrast between his idea of Christianity and that of these early Fathers.

Faith is also referred to now and then as a condition of salvation. Sometimes it appears as faith in God, sometimes as faith in Christ, sometimes with no suggestion of an object. But whatever the phrasing the interpretation of it is very

¹ *Hermas*, *Sim.* VII. 4-5; cf. also *Vis.* III. 7; 6; 2 Clem. 16 : 4 and perhaps 2 Clem. 17 : 7. According to 1 Clem. 49 : 5 "Love covers a multitude of sins"; and in *Hermas*, *Sim.* V. 3 : 3 works of supererogation are recommended: "If you do anything good beyond the commandment of God, you will gain for yourself greater glory and will be more glorious in the sight of God than you would otherwise have been."

² *Hermas*, *Vis.* III. 3 : 5: "Hear then why the tower has been built upon the water; because your life was saved and shall be saved through water." Cf. also *Sim.* IX. 16 : 2 ff. In Barn. 11 : 1 baptism is connected with the remission of sins, as also in *Hermas*, *Mand.* IV. 3 : 1. In 2 Clem. 8 : 6 it is called a seal (*σφραγίς*). "Keep the flesh pure and the seal undefiled that we may obtain eternal life"; so also in 7 : 6 and in *Hermas*, *Sim.* VIII. 6 : 3; IX. 17 : 4.

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different from Paul's. There is no hint in any of these writings of the idea of faith as a mystical bond of union between the believer and Christ. Faith is thought of rather as a motive leading men to obey God and do his will, or leading them specifically to accept Christianity and live the Christian life. "Let us serve God with a pure heart and we shall be righteous. But if we do not serve because we do not believe the promise of God, we shall be miserable."¹ It is this notion of faith that Hermas has in mind when he contrasts it, as he so frequently does, with double-mindedness. As long as a man is doubtful and uncertain his reason for doing right will be inadequate. Only complete assurance, or perfect faith as Hermas calls it in one passage,² will be sufficiently compelling in all emergencies. The assumption throughout is that men need inducements to serve the Lord, that unless they believe that he will reward the obedient and punish the disobedient they will not do his will. Faith is thus a preliminary condition of salvation but not a sufficient condition. Unless it be followed by obedience it is a dead faith and such a faith saves nobody.

There is a passage in First Clement which seems to point in the opposite direction and to show that he thought faith alone sufficient for salvation. "We who through his will were called in Christ Jesus have not been justified by ourselves or by our wisdom or understanding or piety or works that we have done in holiness of heart, but by faith, by which Almighty God has justified all men from the beginning."³ This is a strong statement but it must be read in the light of other utterances of an entirely different character. "He who has humbly, eagerly, reasonably and persistently

¹ 2 Clem. 11 : 1; cf. Heb. XI; Hermas, *Vis.* III. 8 : 4; *Mand.* I; *Sim.* I. 7; V. 1 : 5. Such passages as *Mand.* V. 2 : 1 and XII. 5 : 4 are also to be interpreted in the same way.

² *Mand.* V. 2 : 3.

³ 1 Clem. 32 : 4; cf. 12 : 7; also 2 Clem. 11 : 2 and *Did.* 16 : 5.

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performed the decrees and commandments given by God shall be enrolled and counted in the number of those saved through Jesus Christ.”¹ “Why was our father Abraham blessed, if not because he wrought righteousness and truth through faith?”² It is obvious that in asserting justification by faith Clement was simply reproducing Paul’s idea without appreciating what it involved, and that he really agreed with the other Christians of his day that salvation is to be had only by obeying God and doing his will. That the early Christians should have departed from Paul in this matter is not at all surprising. His interpretation of faith and of its saving power grew out of a religious experience which they had not shared and presupposed conceptions of the nature of man and the work of Christ which were not theirs. The common Jewish and ethnic notion that man’s future destiny depends on his conduct was much easier and more natural to them.

Summarizing the conditions of salvation as we find them referred to or implied in the writings we are dealing with, we may phrase them as faith, repentance, and baptism, followed by the main thing, a life of obedience to the will of God, which means a life of faithful Christian discipleship.

I have been speaking of the conditions of salvation. Let us turn now to the nature of salvation. What was the salvation which these early Christians were counting upon? It may be remarked first of all that it was a future salvation; not something already in possession as Paul pictured it, but something to be had in another life beyond the grave.

¹ 1 Clem. 58:2.

² *Ibid.* 31:2. Cf. also chaps. 8-13. In the other Apostolic Fathers as well we frequently find faith and righteousness, or faith and love, or faith and some other virtue conjoined in such a way as to imply that faith by itself is without efficacy. In the *Shepherd* (*Vis.* III. 8:3) Hermas says that the elect are saved through faith; but there immediately follows a list of virtues which are equally indispensable. In chapter 3 Polycarp speaks of faith “which is mother of us all, if hope follows and love for God and Christ and neighbor goes before.”

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Upon this there was general agreement. As Polycarp puts it: "If we please him in the present world, we shall receive the future world also, as he promised us that he would raise us from the dead, and that if we conduct ourselves worthily of him we shall also reign with him, if we but believe."¹

Salvation had both a negative and a positive side. Negatively it was escape from the divine punishment to be inflicted on men for their sins. This punishment was supposed to be everlasting, and it was commonly pictured as burning by fire as in Jewish and ethnic tradition. "The righteous who have done good and have endured torments and have hated the pleasures of life, when they behold them that have done amiss and have denied Jesus by words or deeds, how they are punished with grievous torments in unquenchable fire, shall give glory to their God, saying, There will be hope for him who has served God with his whole heart."² At this point Christianity, as was often the case, created a need as well as offered a remedy. There were multitudes in that day who did not believe in future punishment, still more who did not believe it everlasting. Such persons learned from Christianity both the penalty that was awaiting them and the way to escape it.

Salvation meant not only release from divine punishment but also the enjoyment of a positive reward. This included according to some of the early Christians the blessings of an earthly kingdom to be established at the return of Christ

¹ Pol. 5:2; cf. also 1 Clem. 34; 2 Clem. 16; Hermas, *Vis.* III. 8.

² 2 Clem. 17:7; cf. 5:4; 7:6; 2 Pet. 3:7, Jude 7. That the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting was taught by the Pharisees and seems to have been taken for granted by Jesus. It was a common belief among the early Christians, not because they had such a sense of the awfulness of sin as to make everlasting punishment alone adequate and appropriate, but because it offered a powerful incentive to virtue. Apparently they did not attempt to rationalize it and did not raise the question why there should be no forgiveness in the future life as there is in this. The Alexandrian Father Origen, it should be said, held a different opinion on the subject, as will appear later.

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and to endure for a thousand years. The earliest reference in Christian literature to this earthly kingdom, the belief in which was derived from the Jews, is found in the Apocalypse of John. "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years." ¹

Eusebius quotes Papias as saying: "There will be a period of some thousand years after the resurrection of the dead and the kingdom of Christ will be set up in material form on this very earth." ² And Irenæus reports that the elders who saw John had heard from him that the Lord said, "The days will come in which vines shall grow, each with ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs, and in each twig ten thousand shoots, and in each shoot ten thousand clusters, and in each cluster ten thousand grapes; and each grape when pressed will give five and twenty casks of wine Similarly the Lord declared that a grain of wheat would produce ten thousand ears and each ear would have ten thousand kernels and each kernel would make ten pounds of fine white flour; and all fruit trees and seeds and herbs would produce in the same proportion. And all animals feeding on the fruits of the earth would become peaceful and harmonious with each other and be in complete subjection to men." ³

The expectation of a millennial kingdom to be set up on earth was not shared by all the early Christians, but it was widespread and continued influential until the end of the

¹ Rev. 20 : 4-6.

² Eusebius, *H. E.* III. 39 : 12.

³ Irenæus, *Adv. hæc.* V. 33 : 3.

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second century.¹ The expectation involved belief in a resurrection, for unless Christians rose again they could not share in the blessings of the kingdom. Jewish belief in a resurrection was due probably to the influence of the Persians. At the time of Christ the belief was common among his countrymen though not universal. He accepted it and passed it on to his followers. It included both among Jews and Christians the resurrection of the righteous, that they might share in the blessings of the millennial kingdom, and of the wicked that they might suffer punishment for their sins. At this point Paul was in disagreement with Christ and with most of the early Christians, for he accepted the resurrection of believers only, basing it upon their union with Christ. At another point Paul disagreed with the others, for he so spiritualized the resurrection as to make it practically no more than immortality, while most of the early Christians interpreted it in materialistic terms as the resurrection of the present fleshly body. Thus it is said in Second Clement: "Let none of you say that this flesh is not judged and does not rise again. Observe. In what were you saved, and in what did you receive sight if not in this flesh? We must therefore guard the flesh as a temple of God; for as you were called in the flesh you will also come in the flesh. If Christ the Lord who saved us, being at first spirit, became flesh and so called us, thus also we shall receive the reward in this flesh."² Nothing could be more

¹ There is a hint of it in 2 Clem. 5 : 5 where the "kingdom which is to come" and "eternal life" seem to be distinguished. The kingdom of God or of Christ is referred to not infrequently in the writings we are dealing with, but it is not always clear whether the phrase denotes the millennial kingdom or the reign of God in heaven. The apologist Justin Martyr also held the belief (cf. his *Dial. with Trypho*, chap. 80) as well as Irenæus, the Montanists, and many others.

² 2 Clem. 9 : 1-5; cf. also 14 : 5 and 1 Clem. 24-26; 49 : 6; Ignatius, *Smyr.* 2; Hermas, *Sim.* V. 7 : 2; also the Old Roman Symbol, the original of the Apostles Creed: "I believe in . . . the resurrection of the flesh" (*σάρκος ἀνάστασις*). See my *Apostles' Creed*, pp. 164 ff.

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explicit than this or more completely opposed to Paul's doctrine of the resurrection.

Whether or not these early Christians looked forward to an earthly kingdom to be established at the return of Christ and to endure for a thousand years, at any rate all of them agreed that salvation meant an immortality of happiness. As Second Clement puts it: "Blessed are they that obey these commandments. Though they suffer for a short time in this world they shall gather the immortal fruit of the resurrection. Therefore let the pious not grieve if he endure sorrow in the present; a blessed time awaits him; he shall live above with the fathers and rejoice throughout a sorrowless eternity."¹ Sometimes this immortality of blessedness was spoken of simply as life in contrast with death, sometimes as eternal life.² It was believed that it would be a life of perfect happiness, but in contrast with the millennial kingdom it was commonly thought of in spiritual rather than physical terms, and detailed descriptions of it were not indulged in except in the Apocalypses of John and Peter. It is interesting that not infrequently knowledge is referred to as one of its blessings. First Clement speaks of immortal knowledge,³ and in the eucharistic prayers of the Didache thanks are given for the life and knowledge and for the knowledge and faith and immortality "which thou hast made known to us through Jesus thy child."⁴

What was meant here was not the mystical knowledge made so much of by the Gnostics, but the knowledge of God's will and of the way of salvation which Clement and the others

¹ 2 Clem. 19:3-4.

² ζωή αιώνιος: e.g. in 2 Clem. 5:5; 8:4; Did. 10:3. In 1 Clem. 35:2 we have "life in immortality" (ζωή ἐν ἀθανασίᾳ); in 2 Clem. 20:5 "the heavenly life" (ἡ ἐπουράνιος ζωή).

³ 1 Clem. 36:2.

⁴ Did. 9:3; 10:2. Toward the close of his epistle (21:5), Barnabas prays that his readers may be given by God "wisdom, intelligence, understanding, knowledge of his ordinances."

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had found in Christianity and without which they could not have been saved.¹ It was a knowledge not confined to the spiritual élite, but shared by all Christians, and therefore prized by the illiterate as well as the learned.

Even where an earthly kingdom was not expected and even after the expectation of it had faded out, belief in the resurrection of the flesh still prevailed and was increasingly emphasized in opposition to some who were denying it. Of course where the future was interpreted spiritually the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh was unnecessary and even incongruous. What place could material bodies have in a purely spiritual realm? But the belief was retained chiefly because a resurrection of the flesh alone seemed real. If it were given up it was felt that the future life would evaporate into nothingness. It was also contended that as men win reward or punishment in the flesh they ought to enjoy their reward and endure their punishment in the same flesh.² It seemed particularly important that the wicked should rise in the flesh for otherwise they could not be adequately punished.

These were the real reasons for believing in a fleshly resurrection, aside from the desire to share in the blessings of the earthly kingdom where such a kingdom was expected. But in the passage quoted above from Second Clement another reason is given. "If Christ the Lord who saved us, being at first spirit, became flesh and so called us, we also shall receive our reward in this flesh." In other words if Christ had intended to save merely the spirits of men he would have appeared as a spirit only. This, of course, is the rationalization of an already existing belief. The

¹ Cf. 1 Clem. 41:4; 2 Clem. 3:1; Barn. 6:9; 18:1 and often. But Clement (1 Clem. 40:1) apparently has something more in mind when he speaks of "the depths of the Divine Knowledge."

² See the words quoted above from 2 Clem. 9:1-4; and my *Apostles' Creed*, p. 167.

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truth is it was really extraordinary that when the blessings of eternal life were pictured as a rule in exclusively spiritual forms the resurrection of the flesh should be so generally insisted on.

Salvation, though it was conditioned on the keeping of the law, was not an achievement of man but a gift of God.¹ This does not mean that these Fathers shared with Paul the notion that the Christian life is divine and supernatural — they were not mystics as Paul and John and others like them were. It does mean however that they believed Christians were not left entirely to themselves but could count on encouragement and assistance from above. The same God, they insisted, that gave the law gave also the reward of eternal life to those obeying it. And he not simply prepared salvation for them, he called and chose them, showed them his favor, bestowed the gift of repentance, guided them in the way they should go, helped them to live as they should,² even instilled righteousness into them according to Hermas,³ and according to Clement forgave them when they went wrong.⁴ No inconsistency was felt any more than among the Jews between such activity on God's part and his requirement that men should earn salvation by keeping his law. But it is evident that two different ideas were operative, ideas that have lain side by side in the thought of Christians during all the centuries.

As God was pictured not simply as lawgiver and judge but also as the author of salvation, it was natural that his goodness should be emphasized as well as his power and justice. His mercy and grace we find referred to now and then, but by no means as often as might be expected. There are

¹ God is called Saviour in 1 Clem. 59 : 3 as in 1 Tim., Titus and Jude. This is a common O. T. usage.

² Cf. 1 Clem. 2 : 4; 59 : 4; 2 Clem. 1 : 7; Hermas, *Sim.* VIII. 11 : 1; Barn. 16 : 9.

³ *Vis.* III. 9 : 1.

⁴ 1 Clem. 60 : 2.

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also references to his love, but these are surprisingly few. God is called Father not infrequently but usually in the sense of the Father of Christ or the creator of the world, and but seldom in his relation to men or Christians.¹ In the *Didache* the Lord's Prayer is quoted and God is addressed as Father also in a couple of eucharistic prayers.² In Second Clement he is referred to as "the Father who called us" and his goodness and mercy are spoken of in First Clement and Barnabas. But this side of his character is less emphasized than his power and justice. The contrast at this point with Paul and John as also with Marcion is very striking, for by all of them as already seen God's love was made much of and the fact that he was the Father of Christians in a very special sense.

The agent of salvation was Jesus Christ. As remarked above, he was thought of chiefly as lawgiver and judge, a conception quite in line with the interpretation of Christianity as a divine law. But as Christianity was salvation as well as law, so Christ was a saviour as well as a lawgiver and judge. He is rarely called Saviour in the writings we are dealing with,³ but that Christians owed their salvation to him is frequently said and his saving work is referred to repeatedly.⁴ He is represented, for instance, as redeeming

¹ See my *Apostles' Creed*, p. 108. God is called the Father of truth in 2 Clem. 3 : 1; 20 : 5.

² *Did.* 8 ff. God is called Father also in *Did.* 1 : 5 and in *Hermas*, *Vis.* III. 9 : 10 without closer definition.

³ He is called Saviour in 2 Clem. 20 : 5; in the pref. to Polycarp's Epistle; in the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 19 : 2; and "salvation" in 1 Clem. 36 : 1; and 2 Clem. 1 : 1. He is also called a high priest, not only in the Epistle to the Hebrews where his priestly office is dwelt on at length, but also in 1 Clem. 36 : 1 ("the high priest of our offerings, the protector and helper of our weakness"); 61 : 3; 64 ("our high priest and protector"); Ignatius, *Phil.* 9 : 1 ("the high priest who has been entrusted with the holy of holies," and "with the secret things of God"); *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 14 : 3 ("the everlasting and heavenly high priest"). But there is no reference, as in Hebrews, to his making propitiation or offering sacrifices for sin, or to his offering himself.

⁴ Cf. e.g. 1 Clem. 58 : 2; 2 Clem. 1 : 4, 7; 2 : 7; 3 : 3; Barn. 5; *Hermas*, *Vis.* IV. 2 : 4; *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 17 : 2.

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men or as the means of their redemption. Thus Second Clement speaks of "the day of his appearing when he shall come to redeem us each according to his works."¹ And First Clement says that "through the blood of the Lord there shall be redemption for all that believe and hope on God."²

Just what is meant by redemption and just what men are redeemed from is not indicated, but the mention of blood in the latter passage shows the influence of Judaism. Elsewhere the author of First Clement speaks of the blood of Christ as "precious to his Father because it was poured out for our salvation and brought the grace of repentance³ to the whole world."⁴ Again there is no indication how the blood of Christ brings "the grace of repentance." Christ is represented also as cleansing men's sins. Thus Hermas says that the Son of God "cleansed their sins by laboring much and undergoing many toils,"⁵ a very vague statement which seems to have no definite conception behind it. According to Barnabas Christ brought both cleansing and remission of sins. "To this end the Lord endured to deliver his flesh to corruption that by the remission of sins we might be cleansed, which cleansing is by the blood of his sprinkling."⁶ The reference to cleansing by blood testifies again to the influence of the Hebrew ritual of which Barnabas made large use in his epistle. Farther on in the

¹ 2 Clem. 17 : 4 (λυτρώσεται).

² 1 Clem. 12 : 7 (λύτρωσις). We are reminded of Jesus' words in Matt. 20 : 28 and Mark 10 : 45, about the Son of man giving his life a ransom (λύτρον) for many. But the two Clements and Barnabas were apparently influenced at this point by the Old Testament rather than by the words of Christ.

³ χάρις μεταβολας. χάρις might perhaps better be translated "boon" than "grace."

⁴ 1 Clem. 7 : 4.

⁵ Sim. V. 6 : 2.

⁶ Barn. 5 : 1. There follows a quotation from Isaiah 53 : 5, 7. Elsewhere Barnabas speaks of the Lord's offering "the vessel of the Spirit as a sacrifice for our sins, that the type might be fulfilled which was given in Isaac who was offered upon the altar." (7 : 3)

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same chapter it is said: "If the Lord endured to suffer for our life, though he was Lord of the whole world, to whom God said from the foundation of the world, Let us make man in our image and likeness, how did he endure to suffer at the hands of men? Learn the truth. The prophets receiving grace from him prophesied concerning him. But he himself that he might destroy death and show forth the resurrection of the dead, because he must needs be made manifest in the flesh, endured that he might redeem the promise made to the fathers, and by preparing for himself a new people might show while on earth that he would himself bring about the resurrection and exercise judgment."¹

In general Barnabas' references to Christ's work, which are very numerous, are confused and obscure and often seem far-fetched and pointless. They are obviously due not to any reasoned theory of the way of salvation but to the notion that the Jewish Scriptures were filled with types and prophecies of Christ, in the light of which his life and work were to be read. It was widely felt that the death of Christ needed to be accounted for. It was not a common event like the death of others, for it was followed immediately by his resurrection. That it demanded some special explanation was evident, and as the prevailing view of salvation and of the means of salvation did not provide such an explanation it had to be found somewhere else, as for instance in the fulfillment of Scripture.

It is significant that the resurrection of Christ is referred to but rarely,² and no use is made of it except as a guarantee of his divine mission or as a promise of our resurrection. It needed no explanation as the death did. Given the death the resurrection followed as a matter of course for such a being

¹ Barn. 5 : 5-7.

² In the writings of the Apostolic Fathers only in 1 Clem. 24 : 1; 42 : 3 and Barn. 5 : 6; 15 : 9.

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as Christ and hence no effort was made to find reasons for it as for the death. The lack of Pauline influence is noticeable at this point as at many others.

Speaking generally it may be said that Christ was recognized by all these early Christians as the agent of their salvation, but there was no accepted theory of his saving work. This is not surprising in view of the fact that salvation was thought of as conditioned chiefly on the keeping of God's law. As other conditions were subsidiary to this, so the saving work of Christ was subsidiary to his work as lawgiver and judge. There is no trace of the notion that one may gain immortality through union with a dying and risen Lord — the notion that was central in the mystery-cults. Nor is there any trace of Paul's idea that the Christian is saved by dying with Christ unto the flesh and rising with him to a new life in the Spirit. Christianity as interpreted by Paul, John, Ignatius, and the Gnostics, was a genuine mystery-religion. As interpreted by the writers with whom we have been dealing in this chapter it was something entirely different: a divine law by keeping which a man may win eternal reward and escape eternal punishment. In other words its kinship was with Judaism not with the current mystery-religions. The existence side by side within the early church of two types of religion fundamentally so unlike is a fact of the greatest historical importance.

CHAPTER VI

THE APOLOGISTS

IN turning from the Apostolic Fathers to the Apologists we enter a new world. The latter were philosophical thinkers who had reflected on the meaning of Christianity and who undertook to exhibit it to outsiders and thus vindicate its right to be. They were contemporaries of the leading Gnostics and were interested, as the Gnostics were, not simply in practical evangelism or in moral instruction, but in the nature and place of Christianity. Their attitude however was very different from that of the Gnostics. They represented another philosophical tendency, the ethical rather than the mystical.

The general conception of Christianity was the same with all the Apologists however much they differed in detail, and what is even more significant it was for the most part identical with that of the Apostolic Fathers whom we have already studied. It might be thought that in apologetic works written ostensibly for an outside public Christianity would appear in another light altogether. In some respects there is a difference, but in essence there is practical identity, showing that the Apologists represented Christianity as they really understood it, and not merely as they wished others to understand it. The most important of the early Apologists was Justin Martyr and we shall do well to deal with him first.

1. JUSTIN MARTYR

We are fortunate in having from Justin's pen two works of an entirely different character, his Apology in two parts,

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known commonly as The First and Second Apologies,¹ and his Dialogue with Trypho.² In the Apology, written shortly after 150, Justin undertook to defend Christianity and commend it to the favorable attention of the rulers of the State. The Dialogue, written soon afterward, records a series of conversations, largely, perhaps wholly, imaginary, with a Jew named Trypho. Its aim was to show from Hebrew prophecy that Christianity according to God's purpose has taken the place of Judaism and that Jews as well as Gentiles can be saved only if they become Christians. The two works were thus written from different points of view, but it is instructive to notice that in spite of the diversity of treatment and divergencies in matters of detail the same general conception of Christianity appears in both, another evidence that it is Justin's real understanding of Christianity and not an interpretation of it intended only for outsiders. As a matter of fact both the Dialogue and the Apology were obviously written with Christians as well as Jews and heathen in view. To fortify the faith of his fellow-disciples was in Justin's mind as well as to convince others.

Justin was a philosopher by profession and he had a high opinion of the value of philosophy. "In reality," he says, "philosophy is the greatest possession and most honourable before God to whom it alone leads and unites us, and they are truly holy who apply their mind to philosophy."³ And again: "Philosophy is a knowledge of that which is and an understanding of the truth; and happiness is the reward of this knowledge and wisdom."⁴

¹ The so-called *Second Apology* of Justin is not a separate work but only an appendix to the first. It is printed as the *Second Apology* in all the editions and for convenience sake will be so referred to in this chapter.

² Other writings ascribed to Justin are not his.

³ *Dial.* chap. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.* chap. 3.

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Like many another in the ancient world Justin studied under various teachers, seeking some satisfactory system of truth. "I surrendered myself," he says, "to a certain Stoic, and when I had spent some time with him and had gained no farther knowledge of God, for he did not know himself and said that such instruction was unnecessary, I left him and betook myself to another who was called a Peripatetic and fancied himself shrewd. And he, after having borne with me for a few days, requested me to pay my fee that our intercourse might not be unprofitable to us. I therefore abandoned him too, believing him to be no philosopher. But as my soul remained full of the desire to understand the genuine philosophy I came to a famous Pythagorean, a man who thought himself very wise. After I had conversed with him with the desire of becoming his hearer and disciple he said, 'What then, are you acquainted with music, astronomy, and geometry? Do you expect to discover what makes for happiness unless you have first learned the things that wean the soul from sensible objects and prepare it for intellectual pursuits, so that it may discern what is beautiful and what is good?' Having commended these branches of learning to me and having declared that they were necessary, he dismissed me when I confessed I did not know them. I was vexed, as was natural, at being disappointed in my hope and the more because I thought he knew something. But again when I considered the time I should have to spend on these subjects I was not able to put up with the long delay. In my embarrassment I decided to seek out the Platonists, for their fame was great. I therefore spent as much time as I could with a wise man who had recently settled in our town and who was eminent among the Platonists. Each day I advanced and made all possible progress. The perception of immaterial things captivated me exceedingly and the contemplation of ideas gave my mind wings, so that

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within a short time I supposed that I had become wise and in my stupidity I hoped forthwith to look upon God. For this is the end of Plato's philosophy." ¹

While he was in this state of mind Justin fell in with an aged Christian and as a result of a conversation with him which he recounts at considerable length, he was converted to Christianity. The conversation touched upon various subjects — the nature of philosophy, the possibility of knowing God, the immortality of the soul — but it was the following words of the old man that carried conviction to Justin: "Long before the time of all the so-called philosophers there were certain fortunate and righteous men, beloved of God, who spoke in the Spirit and foretold future events as they have actually come to pass. They are called prophets. They also have seen the truth and have proclaimed it to men, without regarding or fearing anyone, without desiring glory, but saying only what they heard and saw when filled with the Holy Spirit. Their writings are still extant and he who reads them, if he believes them, receives much light concerning the beginning and end of things, and concerning those matters which it is necessary for a philosopher to know. For they did not make use of demonstration, being trustworthy witnesses of truth superior to all proof. The events which have happened and are happening compel assent to what they said. They are worthy of belief indeed on account of the miracles they performed, since they glorified God, the creator and father of the universe, and announced his son Christ who came from him." ²

"When he had spoken these and many other things," Justin says, "which there is not time now to mention, he departed, bidding me to attend to them, and I have not

¹ *Dial.* 2.

² *Ibid.* 7.

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seen him since. But straightway a fire was kindled in my soul and I was seized with love for the prophets and for the friends of Christ; and reflecting upon his words I found this philosophy alone safe and profitable. In this way and for this reason I am a philosopher."¹

Justin speaks here and elsewhere as if he found in Christianity a new philosophy, but what he really found was assurance for a philosophy which he already had. It is important to remember this if we would rightly estimate his place in the history of Christian thought. Christianity he insists is the supreme and the one true philosophy, but upon examining his interpretation of it we find that it is in substance simply the common moral philosophy of the day, embraced by multitudes of his contemporaries. Justin's interests were controllingly practical. In his conversation with the aged Christian already referred to he defined philosophy as "a knowledge of that which is and an understanding of the truth," but he added, "and happiness is the reward of this knowledge and wisdom." In other words, philosophy for Justin had to do not with matters of mere speculative interest but with such as affect man's life.

According to Justin the essence of philosophy is the knowledge of God. Plato taught that God can be known by the natural reason, for God and man are akin, but though Justin had formerly agreed with him, he was led by his conversation with the aged Christian to deny this and assert that God can be known only by revelation.² He recognized however that even without revelation a man may know many things about God, but his knowledge is abstract not concrete and it lacks clearness and particularly that assurance which revelation alone can give.

¹ *Dial.* 8. There seems no adequate reason to doubt that the experiences recounted in this and the previous chapters were real though they may have been idealized to fit the situation.

² *Dial.* 4.

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Justin's doctrine of God was practical not speculative. The most important thing to know about God is that he is a moral ruler who demands righteousness and will reward the good and punish the wicked. The notion that God cares nothing about virtue and vice, that the distinction between them is a matter of human opinion only, is the greatest impiety and wickedness. All men, Justin maintained, are endowed with free will and hence can live righteously if they choose to do so. Upon this he was very insistent. Thus he says: "God did not make man like other things such as trees and quadrupeds which are unable to act freely. For man would not be worthy of reward or praise if he did right not from choice but because he was made thus; nor would he be justly punished if he did evil not of himself but because he was unable to be other than he was."¹

In Justin's opinion there is no virtue except independent virtue. If a man's character is due to God it is not his own and deserves neither reward nor punishment. The contrast with Paul at this point is complete and striking. Justin recognized that all men sin. This, however, is not because they have an evil nature inherited from their parents or from Adam, but simply because they are ignorant. If they but knew the evil consequences of sin they would avoid it. They might have known them; the natural reason is enough to guide them aright if they will but follow its dictates. But they have been misled by demons and by custom and example.² Justin has a good deal to say about demons and the way they have tempted and deceived men to their undoing. But it is interesting to notice that he ascribes to them as well as to men free will and the power to repent and choose the right, and he is sure that if they do

¹ *Apol.* I. 43.

² *Apol.* I. 5, 14, 54 ff.

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they will be saved.¹ This shows how interested he was in free will and in the reward of virtue, and it also shows that he did not find the seat of sin in the flesh as the Gnostics and many others did.

As men have been misled and deceived by demons they need light. Ability to do right they have in abundance and they know well enough what the right is, but they lack adequate inducements. They need to know, not simply to think it likely but to be sure, that God will reward the good and punish the wicked. The reward to be enjoyed by the good includes an earthly kingdom to endure for a thousand years² and to be followed by the eternal bliss of heaven. There the saved will enjoy communion with God which is impossible on earth.³ The punishment of the wicked will be everlasting and will be suffered by them in the very bodies which they have had here. "Plato said that Rhadamanthus and Minos would punish the wicked who came before them. We assert that the same thing will happen, but through the agency of Christ, and that the wicked will be punished in these same bodies together with their souls, and that forever not for a thousand years only as Plato said."⁴ Thus in Justin's opinion men's ethical ideas are adequate (they know well enough the difference between right and wrong), but their religious ideas are defective and must be corrected and enlarged by revelation.

The first thing needed is the conviction that God demands virtue and that he will reward and punish men according to their deserts. This conviction leads to repentance which is

¹ *Dial.* 141.

² Justin was a premillenarian as many early Christians were. See *Dial.* 80, 81.

³ Cf. *Apol.* I. 8, 10. Justin's view of God's transcendence was such as to make communication or fellowship with him here altogether out of the question.

⁴ *Ibid.* I. 8. Evidently Justin regarded Christianity as superior at this point. See above, p. 86.

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the beginning of the Christian life.¹ Repentance is rewarded by divine forgiveness for all past sins. Thus the slate is wiped clean and a man is enabled to start on the Christian life with nothing against him.² Repentance and forgiveness must be followed by a life of virtue or obedience to the law of God. Justin interpreted virtue in the current terms of his day, but he particularly emphasized kindness and purity. Upon love for others, including love for one's enemies, and upon charity, he laid the greatest stress, and though his general attitude was not at all ascetic he boasted of the chastity of the Christians and of the fact that many of them lived as celibates.³

In the Dialogue Justin called the law of God, obedience to which is an essential condition of salvation, a new law in contrast with the law of the Jews which was abrogated with the coming of Christ.⁴ While the Jewish law was temporary and intended only for Jews, the new law is eternal and is binding upon everybody. In essence it is the same as the old. But it is superior because it omits the many external requirements contained in the old and intended only to remind the Jews of God,⁵ and centres everything in the essential matter — love for God and one's neighbor. The former leads a man to worship God alone, the latter leads him to labor to secure for his neighbor the same good things that he desires for himself.⁶ The new law does not really involve a new way of living; it only clarifies and makes more evident what God has always required. Those who lived well before Moses and those who truly kept the Mosaic law are also saved.⁷

¹ Salvation is the fruit of repentance (*ἐκ μετανοίας*) according to *Apol.* I. 28.

² Cf. *Apol.* I. 61; *Dial.* 95; 141. There is no hint in Justin of forgiveness for sins committed after baptism.

³ *Apol.* I. 14 ff., 29.

⁴ *Dial.* II.

⁵ *Ibid.* 19 ff.

⁶ *Ibid.* 93. Justin quotes Christ's words about love for God and one's neighbor only here.

⁷ *Ibid.* 45.

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On Justin's own principles repentance, followed by a life of virtue and of obedience to the law of God, should be enough to win eternal life. But he was a member of the Christian circle and under the influence of Christian tradition he spoke of other conditions which must be met if one were to be saved. Thus in the *Dialogue* he made the recognition of Jesus' Messiahship a condition of salvation. "If you repent of your sins and acknowledge him to be the Christ and keep his commandments . . . remission of sins shall be yours as I said before."¹ This need not be regarded as inconsistent with Justin's general attitude, for Christ was the revealer of the new law, obedience to which was necessary to salvation. Belief in him as the one who abrogated the old law and put the new in its place, which to a Jew could not mean less than belief in his Messiahship, might well be counted essential.

But Justin went still further and made baptism a condition of salvation. To obtain forgiveness of sins and the hope of inheriting the good things promised there is no other way, he says, than this, "to acknowledge this Christ, to be washed in the fountain spoken of by Isaiah for the remission of sins, and henceforth to live without sin."² This was certainly to add another condition and a condition of an entirely different sort from repentance and obedience, and was thus out of line with Justin's teaching as a whole.³

Moreover, he spoke of baptism as bringing not only remis-

¹ *Dial.* 95.

² *Ibid.* 44.

³ Justin speaks of baptism also in *Apol.* I. 61 and 66 and evidently thought it necessary to account for it and defend it. It may be that this was because he recognized the importance of the institutional side of religion and the necessity of ceremonies and symbols. But in view of the little he says about the Christian church (he refers to it only in *Dial.* 63 and 134), and in view of his general interpretation of religion, it seems more likely that he accepted baptism, and the eucharist as well, rather because they were established rites in the Christian community than because he felt their value and utility.

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sion of sins but also regeneration.¹ He was consistent in connecting baptism with the former but not with the latter, for according to his own theory man needs no new nature (there is no doctrine of original sin in Justin) but is quite able as he is to do the will of God and win salvation. The most that regeneration could mean, if it meant anything at all, was illumination to which Justin refers as one of the results of baptism in *Apology* I. 61. As a matter of fact it is evident that there was no real place in his thought for regeneration and that his use of the word was traditional only.

In accordance with his principles Justin thought of salvation as man's own achievement. He says nothing in his writings about the promise of divine help and strength, as the Apostolic Fathers did.² God endows men with reason that they may distinguish right and wrong and with freedom to choose the one and avoid the other, and he declares his purpose to reward the good and punish the wicked, even sending Christ to make his purpose clearer and more certain. Beyond this, however, he does not go. On the contrary he leaves it to them to embrace Christ and live virtuously if they will and thus win eternal life.

Justin speaks of the Christians as the people of God, a new Israel which has taken the place of the old,³ but this does not mean that God has chosen particular individuals to enjoy his favor. In one passage it is said that God has delayed the consummation "until the number of those fore-

¹ "Washed for the remission of sins and unto regeneration," *Apol.* I. 66. Justin speaks of regeneration also in *Apol.* I. 61 and *Dial.* 138, connecting it in both passages with baptism and in the former quoting the words of Jesus from John 3 : 5.

² In *Dial.* 78 Justin refers to the grace or favor of God which the Christians now enjoy instead of the Jews, but there is no hint of divine help. The grace of Jesus is also referred to, e.g. in *Apol.* II. 13 and in *Dial.* 116, but there is no suggestion that he assists men to live the Christian life beyond giving them light and promising an eternal reward to those that obey.

³ Cf. *Dial.* 119; 123; 135 ff.

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known by him as good and virtuous is complete.”¹ But elsewhere Justin declares explicitly that foreknowledge does not imply foreordination, for if it did God would be the author of evil as well as good and fate would take the place of freedom.² It is foreordained, he says, that the good shall be rewarded and the evil punished but not that some shall be good and others evil. Justin’s thoroughgoing libertarianism clearly appears in this connection as well as elsewhere.

Man’s great need, as has been said, is divine revelation which shall make known especially God’s purpose to reward the good and punish the wicked. This revelation Justin claims is to be found in Christianity. To make good this claim was one of the principal aims of his *Apology*, and he undertook to do so, first by showing the high moral quality of Christianity, and secondly by proving that Christ himself was a divine messenger sent by God to reveal his will and truth.³

Of the superior moral tone of Christianity Justin has much to say. He emphasizes the excellence of Christ’s ethical teaching and quotes at some length his words recorded in the Synoptic Gospels,⁴ and he also calls attention to the virtuous lives of the Christians and contrasts them with the lives of their heathen contemporaries.⁵ He particularly stresses in this connection the Christians’ superiority to the fear of death and their willingness to die for Christ as the most signal evidence of their high character.⁶

Again Justin endeavored to establish his claim that Christianity is a divine revelation by proving that Christ came from God. The chief proof of this he found in prophecy, and

¹ *Apol.* I. 45.

² Cf. *Apol.* I. 43, 44; II. 7; *Dial.* 141.

³ One of Justin’s favorite titles for Jesus was Teacher (*διδάσκαλος*); cf. e.g. *Apol.* I. 6, 12, 17, 19; *Dial.* 76 and often. In *Apol.* I. 13 he says that Christ was born for the purpose of teaching.

⁴ *Apol.* I. 15-17; II. 3, 10; *Dial.* 93.

⁵ Cf. *Apol.* I. 14 ff., 27, 29; II. 12.

⁶ Cf. *Apol.* II. 10 ff.

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to this proof he devoted fully a third of his Apology and the greater part of his Dialogue. The use of prophecy in a dialogue with a Jew was of course natural, but that he should appeal so largely to the Old Testament in the Apology, which was addressed to Gentiles, not Jews, seems surprising. The point however was that there were prophecies of Jesus in earlier writings, not that those writings were of divine authority. The evidence was found in the agreement of prediction with fulfillment — an agreement which proved the divine origin both of the prediction and of the one who fulfilled it. In this connection it is interesting to notice that although Justin frequently refers to the resurrection of Christ he nowhere uses it to prove his divine sonship or to do away with the shame of the cross. Doubtless he recognized that as a fact accepted only by Christians it had no evidential value for outsiders.

Justin insisted that Christ came from God; he did not identify him with God. Although it was believed by many Christians of the day that Christ was himself the supreme God, this was impossible to Justin, not on religious but on philosophical grounds. "The ineffable Father and Lord of all," he says, "neither comes anywhere nor walks nor sleeps nor rises up, but remains in his own place wherever that may be, quick to behold, quick to hear, not with eyes or ears but with indescribable power."¹ Justin was not a dualist as many Platonists of his day were, but he agreed with the Platonists in conceiving of God as a transcendent being, who could not possibly come into contact with the world of men and things. To suppose that he had appeared in Christ, had been born of a woman, and had finally died upon the cross seemed altogether absurd. This did not prevent Justin from thinking of Christ as a divine being, as the early Christians generally thought of him, but it did prevent him

¹ *Dial.* 127.

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from identifying Christ with the supreme God, the creator and ruler of the world. It was essential, however, to show that Christ had come from him or his revelation would lack the authority which Justin claimed for it. To have admitted that Christ was simply one of a number of divine beings like the gods of the Greek pantheon and that he had come on his own authority and initiative, would have been to admit that the revelation he brought had no peculiar worth and was not the supreme philosophy as Justin insisted it was. Moreover, unless Christ came from the supreme God, the creator of heaven and earth, Christianity would be inferior to Judaism which claimed to come from him. And so Justin emphasized Christ's connection with the Father of the universe and he had a good deal to say about God's uniqueness and his power and sovereignty; not that he was especially interested in monotheism, as is commonly supposed, but that he was concerned to magnify Christianity and give it the highest possible support.

In defending Christ's relation to the supreme God Justin followed the current Christian phraseology and called him the Son of God, and he maintained in agreement with the Gospel of John that he was his only Son, thus making the relation between him and God as intimate as possible and excluding all other claimants to the position.¹ Christ is worthy to be called the Son of God on account of his wisdom, and he is rightly so called because he was God's first begotten Logos and also because he was born of a virgin.² In other words Justin recognized Christ as the Son of God both in his preëxistent state (as Hermas also did) and as the man Jesus, to whom alone the title Son of God was commonly applied by earlier Christians.

¹ Cf. *Apol.* I. 23. In *Dial.* 105 Justin calls Christ the "only begotten" (*μονογενής*).

² *Apol.* I. 22, 23.

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That Christ was born of a virgin Justin asserts over and over again. Where the tradition came from we do not know. It was evidently due to the desire to account for Jesus' extraordinary personality by ascribing a divine origin to him. John the Baptist was reported to have had the Spirit from birth and it was natural to carry the divine endowment of Jesus still further back. It may have been due to speculation upon the divine sonship of Jesus which Paul emphasized and which was generally accepted from an early day. The Septuagint translation of Isaiah 7:14, "A virgin shall conceive and bear a son," was appealed to in support of the tradition and may even have suggested it.¹ Some have traced it to the influence of Greek or Babylonian myths, others to the influence of Buddhism. But such influence seems improbable. The tradition is older than the Gospels of Mark and Luke in which it first appears, or at any rate it did not originate with them, for it stands entirely isolated in both gospels and is out of line with other references to Jesus. It is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament nor in any of the Apostolic Fathers except Ignatius.² The apologist Aristides refers to it in passing,³ but the other Greek apologists of the second century, except Justin, are silent about it. According to Justin there were some Christians of his day who rejected the tradition. After his time, however, it was generally accepted on the basis of the accounts in Matthew and Luke. It is inconsistent with the belief in the preëxistence of Christ which Justin shared with most of the Christians of his day, for it means the origin of a new being, the son of the Holy Spirit and Mary, and not the appearance in human form of an already existing being.⁴

¹ Cf. e.g. *Apol.* I. 33, 54; *Dial.* 43, 66. The Hebrew original was different; cf. the words of Trypho in *Dial.* 67, 71.

² Ignatius, Eph. 18:2; 19:1; Smyr. 1:1.

³ *Apol.* 15:1.

⁴ See my *Apostles' Creed*, p. 127. It is interesting to notice that the apocryphal Gospel of the Hebrews calls the Holy Spirit the mother of Jesus.

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In view of this inconsistency it could hardly have maintained itself alongside the doctrine of preëxistence had it not been for Matthew and Luke.

The virgin birth represents a view of Christ's origin midway between the two opposite views, that he was a mere man chosen by God as the Messiah, and that he was a pre-existent divine being. The latter, as has been seen, was shared by Justin and many others. The former was accepted by the early Jewish disciples, and in Justin's day, as he tells us, there were still some who thought of Christ thus. "For there are some of our race, my friends, who confess he is Christ but declare that he is a man of men. I do not agree with them nor would the majority of those who think as I do speak thus."¹ To this interpretation the account of Jesus' baptism in the Synoptic Gospels naturally lent itself, for it seemed to imply that he had hitherto lacked the Spirit. This is particularly true in the form which the account had in the text used by Justin: "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee."² The inconsistency between these words and the belief in the virgin birth caused Justin some trouble as it did many others.³

The tradition that Jesus was born of a virgin and the doctrine of the preëxistence of Christ represented, as has been seen, entirely different ideas of Christ's origin. But they were both accepted by Justin who reconciled them by interpreting the accounts in Matthew and Luke as a description of the method by which the preëxistent Logos or Son of God became incarnate,⁴ and this has been the

¹ *Dial.* 48.

² *Ibid.* 88, 103.

³ Cf. *Dial.* 88 where he explains that Christ was not baptized because he needed baptism and that the Spirit did not descend upon him because he needed the Spirit but for the sake of others.

⁴ Cf. *Apol.* I. 33, 46; *Dial.* 75, 84, 85, 87, 100, 105. Justin's use of the preposition *διὰ* in speaking of the virgin birth in contrast with the use of the preposition *ἐκ* in the Apostles' Creed is significant in this connection. See my *Apostles' Creed*, p. 123.

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interpretation ever since where both preëxistence and virgin birth have been accepted.¹

Justin speaks frequently not only of the Son of God or Logos but also of the Holy Spirit.² The idea of the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God, was derived from Judaism, and it was generally believed among the early Christians that the Spirit was especially active in the Christian church. They did not speculate about the nature of the Spirit or about its relation to God and Christ. They commonly thought of it not as an individual being or person but simply as the divine power working in the world and particularly in the church. Paul, as was seen, often used the terms God, Christ and Spirit interchangeably. Evidently he thought of the Spirit as the spiritual nature of God in which both God and Christ shared. Hermas represented the Spirit as the Son of God,³ and declared that God "made the holy preëxistent Spirit which created all creation to dwell in flesh which he desired."⁴ In Justin we find a similar confusion between the Spirit and the Son of God. "It is wrong," he says in speaking of the power of God which overshadowed Mary, "to understand the spirit and power of God as anything else than the Logos who is also God's first born."⁵ Moreover he represents the Logos as speaking through the prophets,⁶ a function which, in agreement with most Christians, he commonly ascribed to the Spirit.

The Spirit, indeed, so far as appears from Justin's writings, had no peculiar function as distinct from the Logos or Son. And yet under the influence of Christian tradition and particularly of the baptismal formula which mentioned God,

¹ According to Eusebius (*H.E.* III. 27 : 3) there were certain Ebionites who accepted the virgin birth while denying the preëxistence of Christ. This was the position also of Theodotus and Paul of Samosata.

² On the Holy Spirit see my *Apostles' Creed*, pp. 145 ff.

³ *Sim.* IX. 1 : 1.

⁴ *Sim.* V. 6 : 5.

⁵ *Apol.* I. 33.

⁶ *E.g.* in *Apol.* I. 36.

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Christ and the Spirit, or the Father, the Son and the Spirit, Justin was obliged to recognize a distinction between Christ and the Spirit, or the Son and the Spirit, though what it was he could not say. Had it not been for the three-fold baptismal formula he would doubtless have contented himself with two divine beings, God the Father, and the Logos or Spirit or Son of God who became incarnate in Christ; and the same may be said of the church after his day.

According to Justin because Christ is the Son of God Christians are justified in worshipping him. Evidently the worship of Christ was a common custom among the Christians and it seemed to Justin of the utmost importance to vindicate the practice. The worship of the Son of God in addition to the supreme God himself made no difficulties for him. "We worship and adore God," he says, "and the Son who came from him and taught us these things, and the host of the other good angels, who follow him and are made like him, and the prophetic Spirit, honouring them in reason and in truth."¹ In other words Justin had no objection to the worship of many beings if they were in harmony with God and came from him. Nor would his Gentile contemporaries have had any objection to it. It was only Christ's earthly career that made such worship seem absurd — his humble and even illegitimate birth and his death on the cross.² Justin undertook to remove this prejudice by showing that these events were prophesied long before and also by calling attention to similar circumstances in the lives of the gods whom the Gentiles were in the habit of worshipping.³ This was enough to vindicate the worship of Christ for Gentile readers.

But with the Jews it was another matter. Their monotheism made difficulties which were not felt by Justin and other Gentiles. And so in his Dialogue with Trypho he

¹ *Apol.* I. 6.

² Cf. *ibid.* I. 13.

³ Cf. *ibid.* I. 21.

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adopted another method. He undertook to prove that the Jewish Scriptures bore witness to two Gods: first, the supreme and unbegotten God, the ineffable Father and Lord of all, who according to Justin had never appeared on earth, and had never been seen and could not be seen by human eyes, and secondly, the God of the theophanies, who came down to earth repeatedly and walked and talked with men. This second God was the Son of the first and was another and distinct being, though one with him in will and purpose. He was begotten before the creation of the world, and became incarnate in Christ as was made evident by prophecy.

Justin found it comparatively easy to prove, at least to his own satisfaction, that Jesus was the Messiah, but to show that he was a divine being who ought to be worshipped in addition to the supreme God was much more difficult and he argued the matter at great length.¹ "I will give you, my friends," he said, "another testimony from the Scriptures that as a beginning before all creatures God begat from himself a certain rational power which is called by the Holy Spirit now Glory of the Lord, again Wisdom, again Angel, again God, again Lord and Logos. Also he called himself Captain of the host when he appeared to Jesus the Son of Nave in the form of a man. For he can be called by all these names since he serves the Father's will and was begotten of the Father by will."² "I suppose I have said often enough that when my God says 'God went up from Abraham,' or 'the Lord spake unto Moses,' and 'the Lord came down to see the tower which the sons of men had built,' or 'God shut Noah within the Ark,' you must not imagine that the unbegotten God himself came down or went up anywhere. For the ineffable Father and Lord of

¹ *Dial.* 55 ff.

² *Ibid.* 61.

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all neither comes anywhere nor walks nor sleeps nor rises up, but remains in his own place, wherever that may be, quick to behold and quick to hear, not with eyes or ears but with indescribable power. And he sees all things and knows all things, and none of us is hidden from him. And he is not moved or confined to a place or to the whole world, for he was even before the world was made. How then could he talk with anyone or be seen by anyone or appear in the smallest part of the earth, when the people at Sinai were not able to look on the glory of the one who was sent by him, and Moses himself could not enter into the tabernacle which he had made when it was filled with the glory of God, and the priest could not endure to stand before the temple when Solomon carried the ark into the house at Jerusalem which he himself had built? Therefore not Abraham nor Isaac nor Jacob nor any other man saw the Father and ineffable Lord of all and of Christ himself as well, but they saw him who according to his will was at once God, his Son, and the angel who ministered to his will, and who it pleased him should be born man by the Virgin; who also was fire when he spoke with Moses from the bush."¹

Justin called Christ not only the Son of God but also the Logos. To this he was led by his apologetic interest. The term Logos which means both reason and word was common in the philosophical vocabulary of the day. It was used by the Stoics for the divine forces resident in the world and by the Platonists for the intermediate beings or agents which bridged the chasm between God and the universe and made it possible for God to communicate with the world and act upon it.² Justin's use of the term was justified and probably suggested by the prologue of the Fourth Gospel, but he employed it with a strictly apologetic purpose, not merely

¹ *Dial.* 127.

² For a fuller account of the Logos conception see below pp. 204 ff.

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to emphasize the philosophical character of Christianity, and thus commend it to the attention of thinkers, but also and particularly to enhance the authority and significance of Christ. The identification of the Logos with Jesus Christ, which was not original with Justin but owed much to him, was a step of the very greatest importance. Its influence on Christian thought has been tremendous and will appear as we go on.

The Logos according to Justin is the divine reason, begotten before the creation of the world and employed by God as his agent in creation. He is a personal being, identical with the second God of the Old Testament theophanies and also with Christ, in whom he became incarnate. And yet Justin often uses the word *logos* in an impersonal sense for human or divine reason, the original meaning of the word. Frequent confusion results from this twofold use of it not only by Justin but by other Christian writers as well. Outside Christianity also the word was used both personally and impersonally, the Logos being often identified with the mythical figure *Hermes*.¹

It is to the divine Logos, according to Justin, that men owe their reason and whatever truth they possess. All the truth men have came from him, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. The Logos spoke in an especial way through the Hebrew prophets and finally became incarnate in Christ. Christ differed from others because he had the whole Logos and so was in possession of all truth; and even more because he was himself the Logos. "The whole Logos," Justin says, "on our account became Christ, body and mind and soul."² Consequently all that are in possession of truth are in so far in possession of Christ and hence are to be recognized as Christians: Socrates and other Greek

¹ See Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, 2nd ed., pp. 306 ff.

² *Apol.* II. 10.

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philosophers as well as patriarchs and prophets. "We have been taught that Christ is the first born of God and we have said above that he is the Logos of whom every race of man partakes. And those who have lived rationally are Christians even if thought to be atheists, as among the Greeks Socrates and Heraclitus and others like them, and among the Barbarians Abraham and Ananias and Azarias and Misael and Elias and many others, whose deeds and whose names we refrain from recounting now because it would take too long. And thus those who in other days lived irrationally were wicked and enemies of Christ and murderers of those living rationally. But they that lived and are living in accordance with reason are Christians and fearless and undisturbed."¹ And again, "Whatever things have been rightly said by anyone belong to us Christians."²

Justin has often been praised for his breadth and tolerance in calling Socrates and other Greek philosophers Christians. He did it, however, not at all in their interest but in the interest of Christ. It was not tolerance and broadmindedness that actuated him but the desire to emphasize Christ's universal influence and authority. Recognizing this we shall not be surprised when we find him claiming that Moses was more ancient than the Greeks and that their philosophers and poets got from him or from the prophets whatever truth they possessed.³ Even so they got it from the Logos to whom Moses and the prophets owed all the truth they knew.

According to Justin the Logos, or Son of God, as I have said, became incarnate in Jesus Christ. But why? Two questions are involved: first, Why was it necessary for God to reveal his will and truth through Christ when he had already done so through the prophets? And secondly, Why did the Logos become incarnate? Could he not have

¹ *Apol.* I. 46.

² *Ibid.* II. 13.

³ *Ibid.* I. 44.

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spoken through Christ as he did through the prophets without taking on human flesh and becoming himself a man?

To the first question Justin replies that the prophets had not been understood and hence a farther revelation was needed in order to interpret them and make their meaning clear. It is worth noticing that he does not claim that Christ taught anything new. That God is the ruler and judge of the world and that he demands righteousness of men and will reward the good and punish the wicked eternally, all this had been declared by the prophets and should have been enough for any man. But it had not proved so and hence Christ repeated it and emphasized it and set it out more clearly.

But why could he not have done this without becoming incarnate? In answer to this question Justin had nothing better to say than that the prophetic revelation needed confirmation which was supplied by Jesus Christ. In his earthly career Christ fulfilled in detail the predictions made by the prophets hundreds and even thousands of years before;¹ and so proved in the most conclusive possible fashion both their divine commission and his own, and hence the truth of their teachings as well as his.

On Justin's own principles this might seem sufficient to account not only for the incarnation but for all the events of Jesus' life. But as a matter of fact for certain events, particularly for the death of Christ, he sought other reasons as well. The death of a divine being, the preëxistent Logos or Son of God, was an extraordinary occurrence which demanded more of an explanation than the mere fulfilment of prophecy. Justin's general conception of Christianity was such as to afford no reason why Christ should have died. To Paul the death of Christ had a place of fundamental importance, but on Justin's principles it could only

¹ *Apol.* I. 31.

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seem superfluous, and yet there must have been some good ground for it. And so he cast about for an explanation and found no fewer than half a dozen — none of them very convincing probably even to himself.

For one thing, by his death Christ broke the power of demons.¹ How he did this is not indicated. Very likely Justin himself had no idea. But he based his conclusion on the practice common among the early Christians of exorcising demons by the use of Christ's name and particularly the name of Christ the crucified. "A hidden power of God," he says, "belonged to the crucified Christ before whom the demons tremble."² Thus by his death on the cross Christ acquired authority and sovereignty. "The Lord hath reigned from the tree" was Justin's version of Psalm 96: 10.³ In other words he treated the cross as a symbol of power and was followed in this by many other Christians. Again he gave no explanation of his meaning, but in thinking of Christ's death as his entrance on lordship he doubtless thought of it in connection with his resurrection.⁴ The resurrection, however, needed no explanation. Having died, such a being as Christ could not do otherwise than rise again and hence Justin referred to the death, without which there could have been no resurrection, when he was thinking of both together. Similarly he spoke of Christ's death as a precondition of his returning to judge the world. Why it should have been necessary for him to

¹ Cf. *Apol.* II. 6; *Dial.* 30, 41.

² *Ibid.* 49.

³ *Apol.* I. 41 (cf. *Dial.* 73). "From the tree" is lacking in the Hebrew as also in the Septuagint. In *Apol.* I. 55 Justin gives several examples of the cross as a symbol of power, including the structure of the human frame which differs from that of irrational animals in that it stands erect and has the arms spread and the nose extending downward from the forehead, thus reproducing the form of a cross.

⁴ Cf. *Dial.* 76. The idea, widely current in modern times, that by his death on the cross, the supreme manifestation of divine love, Jesus conquered the hearts of men and thus became their Lord, finds no place in the writings of Justin or his contemporaries.

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die in order to return as judge Justin does not say. Again he was evidently thinking of the resurrection as well as the death. That if Christ died he must have risen in order to exercise lordship and to return as judge might seem reasonable enough, but that he must have died in order to exercise these functions — that he could not have returned to his heavenly abode without dying — is not so clear. Justin believed in the ascension; why Christ could not have ascended without first dying and rising again does not appear.

Still farther, Justin asserted that in his crucifixion Jesus bore the curses of all for the sake of the human race, the statement being suggested by Deuteronomy 21:23 and 27:26.¹ How this could benefit others is not said. Evidently it represented no more to Justin than the fulfilment of a prophecy. He also declared that Christ shared our sufferings that he might give us healing,² a suggestion of the power of human sympathy which unfortunately he seems not to have reflected further upon.

Justin also spoke of Christ's death or more specifically of his blood, as cleansing those who believe in him.³ This explanation was due to the words, "washing his robe in the blood of the grape," which Justin quoted from Genesis 49:10 as a prophecy of the passion. Similarly he quoted frequently from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah and applied it to Christ in detail.⁴ Justin's conception of Christianity was such as to leave little place for these and similar notions of Christ's work — or at any rate as to make them unimportant — but in his Dialogue especially he made large use of the Old Testament, and over and over again felt the influence of its words even when they represented a different point of view from his own.

¹ *Dial.* 95-96.

² *Ibid.* I. 32.

³ *Apol.* II. 13.

⁴ *Cf. Dial.* 13 ff; 17, 54, 86, III.

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Once more he referred to Christ's death and in this case also to his resurrection as destroying death and bestowing immortality. "He endured both to be despised and to suffer that by dying and rising again he might conquer death."¹ These words remind us of Paul as the reference to the eucharist in the following passage reminds us of John. "As by the Logos of God Jesus Christ our Saviour was made flesh and had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so we have been taught that the food which is blessed by the word of prayer derived from him and which, when transformed, nourishes our blood and flesh is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh."² In both cases Justin gave expression to ideas that were current in certain quarters, but were quite out of accord with his general interpretation of Christianity and seem to have had no farther influence on his thought.

Thus Justin multiplied reasons for Christ's death in his effort to explain an event which was really an insoluble mystery to him. On his own principles there was no need of it whatever; and yet why should a divine being die if there were no need? Many others then as now were satisfied with a 'Thus saith the Lord,' but Justin could not rest content therewith. Here as elsewhere he must, if possible, show the Christian faith rational, not only for the sake of outsiders but doubtless for his own sake as well.

On the whole, it may be said, Justin was a fairly though not perfectly consistent exponent of the idea of Christianity as a revelation of divine sanctions for morality. His conception of Christianity was in line with that of the Fathers whom we considered in the previous chapter. To them Christianity was a divine law to which was attached the promise of salvation for those observing the law. To Justin it was in essence the same thing, though with him because

¹ *Apol.* I. 63.

² *Ibid.* I. 66.

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of his apologetic interest the emphasis fell on the naturalness of Christianity and on its agreement with and confirmation of the best philosophical, that is, moral and religious thought of the world.

2. OTHER APOLOGISTS OF THE SECOND CENTURY

In addition to the writings of Justin Martyr we have a number of apologetic works from the second century. The Apology of Aristides, who is referred to as an Athenian philosopher in the Chronicle of Eusebius, was addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius and was written probably not long before 150. Tatian, an Assyrian Christian, wrote his Discourse to the Greeks about the middle of the century. The Athenian Athenagoras, a Christian philosopher as he is called in the title of his work, addressed an appeal to Marcus Aurelius and his co-regent Commodus, shortly before 180.¹ He also wrote a treatise on the resurrection which is still extant. In it he undertook to prove on rational grounds not only the immortality of the soul but the resurrection of both soul and body, for as the whole man has sinned or done righteously the whole man must be punished or rewarded. From the pen of Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, we have a defense of Christianity in three books written about 190 and addressed to a certain heathen named Autolycus. Of unknown date and authorship are two apologetic writings, the one known as *Oratio ad Gentiles* (Discourse to the Greeks), the other as *Cohortatio ad Gentiles* (Hortatory Address to the Greeks),² both of them wrongly

¹ *Supplicatio pro Christianis*, or *A Plea for the Christians*.

² Harnack in his *Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur* assigns the *Oratio* to the late second or early third century and the *Cohortatio* to the late third century. The latter however seems to me much nearer in spirit to the writings we are dealing with in this chapter than to those of the third century, and in view particularly of the statement at the close that it is possible to learn about God and the true religion only from the prophets, where no mention is made of the N. T., I find it difficult to put the work as late as Harnack does.

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ascribed to Justin. In addition there is the so-called Epistle to Diognetus which is commonly printed among the Apostolic Fathers. It too is of unknown date and authorship.

It is not necessary to deal with any of these Apologists in detail. They represent in the main the same general type of Christianity as Justin's and it is enough to call attention to certain resemblances and differences. Although most of them do not speak of Christianity as a philosophy,¹ and although some of them delight to ridicule the philosophers and emphasize the contrast instead of the agreement between their ideas and those of the Christians,² their general notion of Christianity was almost identical with his. They interpreted it largely in intellectual terms and thought of it as a revealed system of truth, as he did, and they agreed with him that its essence is correct knowledge of the true God.

Their definitions of God are as abstract and metaphysical as Justin's, or even more so.³ They thought of him as transcendent, ineffable, and unapproachable, as Justin did. Thus Tatian says "God is spirit, not pervading matter, but the maker of material spirits and of the forms which are in matter. He is both invisible and impalpable, being himself Father of sensible and invisible things. We know him through his creation and we apprehend his invisible power in his works."⁴ But in spite of their emphasis on the divine transcendence, in one or two of them there is a

¹ Tatian, however, speaks of "our philosophy" (31) and calls himself an adherent of the barbarian philosophy (42; cf. also 35). Christianity is spoken of as "our philosophy" also in a fragment of a lost *Apology* by Melito quoted by Eusebius, *H.E.* IV. 26 : 7.

² Cf. e.g. *Cohortatio ad Gentiles*, 3 ff; 22 ff.; Theophilus III. 5 f; and Tatian 2 f; 25 ff. Tatian makes fun of the studies of the Greeks, including grammar, geography and astronomy. "How can I believe him," he exclaims, "who says that the sun is a red hot mass and the moon an earth?" (chap. 27).

³ Cf. e.g. Aristides I; Tatian 4; Athenagoras 4; Theophilus I. 3 ff; II. 3, 22; and the description of God in the early second-century *Preaching of Peter*, quoted in Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis*, Bk. VI. chap. 5.

⁴ Chap. 4; cf. also 12.

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certain mystical tendency quite out of harmony with their general attitude and the attitude of the other Apologists. Thus Theophilus speaks of the eyes of the soul by which we see God,¹ and Tatian emphasizes the presence of the divine Spirit and the necessity of becoming united with him if we are to be saved.²

Though their definitions of God, as I have said, were for the most part metaphysical, their primary interest in God was practical. It was not with an abstract monotheism they were chiefly concerned but with God the moral ruler of the world. Like Justin they interpreted the world teleologically. It was made for the sake of man and the goodness of God was shown in its creation.³ They also emphasized divine providence or the control and governance of the world by God.⁴ Above all they wished to show that God demands virtue and that he will reward the good and punish the wicked. In this they found the essence and most of them the whole of Christianity.

Aristides thus sums up the truth which the Christians are in possession of: "They know God, the creator and ruler of all, through his only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit, and they worship no other God beside him. They have the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ himself graven on their hearts, and they observe them, looking forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come."⁵ Then follows an account of their conduct: "They do not commit adultery or fornication; they do not bear false

¹ See I. 2. On the other hand in I. 5 he denies that men can see God. God is to be known only from his works (cf. also I. 7). In the light of passages such as these the reference to the eyes of the soul must not be pressed. It may mean nothing more than such a cast of mind as leads a man to see evidences of God's presence which are not visible to others.

² Chap. 15. Aristides (13) asserts that God is in all; but in the same chapter he declares that man has never seen God.

³ Cf. Aristides 5; Theophilus II. 18; Diognetus 10.

⁴ Cf. Athenagoras 7; Theophilus II. 8.

⁵ Chap. 15.

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witness; they do not covet the possessions of others; they honour father and mother and love their neighbors; they judge justly; they refrain from doing to another what they do not wish should happen to themselves; they appeal to those who injure them and win them as friends; they strive to do good to their enemies; they are gentle and kind; they abstain from unlawful conversation and from all impurity; they do not despise the widow or oppress the orphan; he who has gives without reproach to him who has not. If they see a stranger they take him under their roof and rejoice over him as over a real brother, for they call each other brethren not after the flesh but after the spirit. They are ready to give up their lives for Christ, for they keep his ordinances steadfastly, living in holiness and righteousness as the Lord God commanded them, giving thanks to him every hour for all food and drink and other good things.”¹

Of divine rewards and punishments these Apologists all have much to say.² The subject was evidently of the utmost importance to them, for unless men are to reap the consequences of their evil deeds they cannot be expected to live righteous lives. Thus Athenagoras says: “Unless we thought that a God presides over the human race should we thus purify ourselves from evil? Certainly not. But because we are persuaded that we shall give an account of the whole course of our present life to God who made us and the world, we adopt a temperate and benevolent and despised mode of living, believing that even if our lives be taken from us we shall suffer no great evil here compared

¹ Cf. Athenagoras II ff; Theophilus III. 12-15; and also Diognetus 5-6 where the other-worldliness of the Christians is particularly emphasized in a long and eloquent passage.

² E.g. Aristides 15, 17; Tatian 6, 12, 17; Athenagoras 12, 31, 36 and *De resurrectione*, 19-23; Theophilus I. 7-14, II. 27; Diognetus 10; also the *Hortatory Address to the Greeks*, I, 14.

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with the good we shall receive there from the great judge for our meek and benevolent and temperate life.”¹ Elsewhere he says “If no judgment whatever were to be passed upon the deeds of men they would have no advantage over irrational creatures, but would be even worse off than they, for they keep their passions in subjection and concern themselves about piety and righteousness and other virtues, whereas a life after the manner of brutes would be the best, virtue would be foolish, the threat of punishment a matter for laughter and indulgence in every kind of pleasure the greatest good.”² In spite of such utterances Athenagoras’ writings are for the most part lofty in tone and his Apology contains beautiful summaries of the Christian ideal of love.³

Consistently with their emphasis on rewards and punishments most of the Apologists made much of free will,⁴ Tatian and Athenagoras insisting that angels are free as well as men. On the other hand Tatian asserts that demons are beyond repentance,⁵ so that his theory that free will is necessary to moral activity breaks down in their case. He was sure, however, that they were originally free and that their present evil state was their own fault.

Demons have a large place in these apologetic writings, for that matter in early Christian literature in general. In the ancient world the belief in demons was very common among the upper classes as well as the lower. Disease both mental and physical was widely traced back to them; they were often held responsible even for convulsions of nature; and misfortunes of all sorts were supposed to be due to their malevolence. The belief played an important part in the religions of the age, including Judaism and Christianity.

¹ Chap. 12; cf. also 31.

² Athenagoras, *De resurrectione* 19.

³ Cf. chaps. 11, 32, 35.

⁴ Cf. e.g. Tatian 7, 11; Athenagoras 24; Theophilus II. 27.

⁵ Chap. 15.

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To offer protection against the machinations of evil spirits was regarded as one of the chief functions of any religion, and exorcism was practiced on a large scale within the Christian church as well as elsewhere. The persuasion that the world was infested with evil demons was one of the reasons for the all but universal notion among the Christians that they must break with it so far as possible, a notion that continued and grew stronger even after the loss of the early faith in the speedy return of Christ. As man, though created good, has abused his free will and fallen into sin, so the world, though also created good, has been corrupted by demons and hence is to be eschewed. Thus the conviction that the Christian should turn his back upon the world was reconciled with the doctrine of divine creation, and ascetic practices of the most extreme kind became increasingly common and were not confined to those, like the Gnostics, who believed in the essential evil of matter. Tatian was a capital example of this attitude. He had an elaborate theory of demons to whom he devoted a long section in his *Apology*.¹ According to him they were made of matter and belong in the material realm.² To conquer them we must repudiate material things altogether. Tatian himself put his principles into practice by joining ultimately an ascetic sect known as the Enkratites.

The writers we are dealing with had a Logos doctrine similar to Justin's,³ though some of them emphasized the oneness of the Logos with God more than he and made less of the distinction between them.⁴ This was natural in view

¹ Chaps. 7-19. In chap. 17 Tatian says that the demons turn men from the worship of God and lead them to trust in herbs and roots. And in chap. 18 he denounces medicine as one of their inventions.

² The world according to Tatian has a spirit, but it is material as the spirits of the demons are (12 and 16).

³ All of them refer to the Logos except Aristides.

⁴ Cf. Tatian 5, 7. In Athenagoras 10 and Theophilus II. 10, 22, the Logos is spoken of as in God from eternity, or before the creation of the world.

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of the fact that they did not carry the divine transcendence as far as he did and so had less need of a subordinate agent to mediate between God and the world. Nevertheless they, too, called the Logos the Son of God and represented him, perhaps under Justin's influence, as God's agent in creation, as the God of the Old Testament theophanies, and as the one who spoke through Moses and the prophets.¹ The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are mentioned together now and then,² and Theophilus uses the word Trinity (*τριάς*) in speaking of God,³ though his Trinity curiously enough consists not of Father, Son and Spirit, but of God, Logos and Wisdom.⁴

The incarnation has little place in these documents. Tatian refers to it but not Athenagoras or Theophilus though they both quote words of Christ without naming him.⁵ Only Aristides and the Epistle to Diognetus have anything to say about his earthly life.⁶ Even less is made of his saving work. The *Cohortatio ad Gentiles* speaks simply of his "restoring the ancient religion of our ancestors."⁷ Aristides represents him as coming down from heaven for the salvation of men and revealing himself among them that he might recall them to himself.⁸ In the Epistle to Diognetus there is more than in any of the other apologies except Justin's about the work of Christ or rather about the work of the Child or Son of God,⁹ for the author does not

¹ Cf. e.g. Tatian 5; Athenagoras 6; Theophilus II. 18, 22, 33. On the Logos see also Diognetus 11; *Oratio ad Gentiles*, 5; *Cohortatio ad Gentiles*, 38.

² E.g. in Aristides 15; and Athenagoras 10, 12, 17, 24. The Spirit is sharply distinguished from the Son or Logos by Athenagoras who avoids Justin's confusion between them.

³ See II. 15. This is the earliest occurrence of the word Trinity in Christian literature.

⁴ In I. 7 and II. 18 he associates Logos and Wisdom together in the work of creation, and in II. 10 he identifies them. There is thus a confusion similar to that in Justin between the Logos and the Spirit.

⁵ Cf. Athenagoras 32, 33; Theophilus III. 13, 14.

⁶ Aristides 15; Diognetus 7 ff.

⁷ Chap. 38.

⁸ Chap. 15.

⁹ He speaks both of *παῖς θεοῦ* and of *υἱὸς θεοῦ*.

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mention Christ by name.¹ Christianity seemed to him something quite new in the world and he was not hampered as the others were by its relation to Judaism. Before the Son of God came he says no one had any knowledge of what God is, but God manifested his saving purpose through his Son, giving him as "a ransom for us, the holy for the wicked, the innocent for the guilty, the just for the unjust, the incorruptible for the corruptible, the immortal for the mortal."² "For what else," the author continues, "could cover our sins but his righteousness? In whom was it possible for us to be made just, wicked and impious as we were, except in the Son of God alone?" All this is very different from anything found elsewhere in the writings we are dealing with. We know neither the author nor the date of the work and it is impossible to say just where he got his ideas.

Tatian also was singular in his view of salvation. He connected salvation not with Christ but with the Spirit. It comes from the knowledge of God and from union with the divine Spirit. "The Spirit of God," he says, "is not with all, but it takes up its abode with those who live justly."³

Like Justin all these Apologists except the author of the Epistle to Diognetus believed that the great truths of Christianity — God the moral ruler of the world, virtue his will, and future rewards and punishments — had been taught before Christ's time.⁴ Christianity therefore was

¹ The name Christ or Jesus or Jesus Christ is found in none of the apologetic writings we are dealing with except Justin, Aristides and the *Cohortatio*.

² Epistle to Diognetus 9 : 2. In an appendix from another hand (chaps. 11-12) the Logos is referred to as a teacher and revealer, but is also spoken of as "born in the hearts of saints" (11 : 4).

³ Chap. 13; cf. also 15, where he says if the flesh of man be like a temple God is pleased to dwell in it by his Spirit. This of course shows the influence of Paul's words.

⁴ Cf. Tatian 29; Theophilus I. 14. See also the quotation from the lost *Preaching of Peter* in Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis* VI. 15.

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not something new but merely the republication and confirmation of truths already known. These had been proclaimed by poets and philosophers, but also and still more clearly by the Hebrew prophets through whom the Spirit of God or the divine Logos spoke. It was by the reading of the prophets that both Tatian and Theophilus were converted to Christianity according to their own testimony. It seems curious, but it is in line with their failure to emphasize the incarnation, that in spite of this little use was made by these Apologists of Justin's great argument for the divine origin of Christianity — the argument from prophecy. Theophilus referred to it in passing,¹ but cited no specific correspondences between prediction and fulfillment, and the others neglected the argument altogether.

Some found the chief evidence of the truth of Christianity in its antiquity, upon which they laid special emphasis in answer to the accusation that their religion was of recent origin.² This meant that Moses and the prophets were regarded as teachers of Christianity. It was claimed that they were older than the writers of other peoples and whatever truth the latter had they got from the former, or stole from them as Theophilus puts it.³ Thus the existence of a knowledge of the truths of religion among other peoples was reconciled with the claim that the truths are based on revelation alone.

Justin's splendid idea that the Logos was everywhere, instructing men of all races in the truth, does not appear in the others. But Theophilus recognized that there was

¹ Cf. I. 14; II. 33; also II. 36 where he speaks of the prophetic Sibyl.

² Cf. Tatian 31, 36-41; Theophilus II. 37; III. 16-29; *Cohortatio* 8-12.

³ Tatian 40; *Cohortatio* 27 ff.; Theophilus II. 37. It is interesting to notice that Celsus, the famous second-century opponent of Christianity, accused the Christians of drawing many of their teachings from the philosophers, thus reversing the claim of the Apologists. (Cf. e.g. Origen's *Contra Celsum*. VI. 12, 16; VII. 28.)

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some knowledge of the truth among the poets and philosophers independent of the prophets.¹ In other words the great truths of religion — God, virtue, and rewards and punishments — are natural and not simply revealed truths. At the same time like the others he believed that without revelation there could be no assurance of them. The truths of religion cannot be proved; we depend for our certainty of them upon divine authority.² Thus revelation becomes a necessity, and Justin's problem how to account for the prophets and Christ when the truths of religion were already known by reason or through the activity of the Logos is easily solved or disappears altogether. Justin's second and from the apologetic point of view more difficult problem, to find something new in Christianity which should justify the incarnation, was avoided by minimizing or disregarding the incarnation and so making anything new unnecessary.

These Apologists, with the exception of the author of the Epistle to Diognetus, were even more thoroughgoing than Justin in making Christianity a mere system of truth. The result was the depreciation of Greek philosophy, the identification of Christianity with the religion of the Old Testament, the minimizing of the incarnation, and the loss of emphasis on the death of Christ, on divine forgiveness and help, and on the sacraments. While more consistent than Justin they were thus farther from traditional Christianity than he. So far as appears from Athenagoras, Theophilus and the *Cohortatio ad Gentiles*, the whole of Christianity was in the prophets and Christ need never have lived or taught. In the *Cohortatio ad Gentiles*, indeed, it is explicitly said that Christ recalled us to the religion of our forefathers, that is, the religion of the prophets, and that nowhere else than from

¹ II. 38; cf. Tatian 29 and Athenagoras 7.

² Cf. Tatian 32; also the Pseudo-Justinian tract *De resurrectione* chap. 1 where there is an explicit statement that truth cannot be proved but must be believed because of its character or upon the authority of revelation.

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them is it possible to learn anything concerning God and the true religion.¹

The Christianity of these writers was simply universalized and denationalized Judaism, or rather, since none of them thought of the Jewish law as still binding, Christianity, as they conceived it, was a universal religion, as old as the creation, of which the Hebrew prophets were the great teachers, and whose tenets were God the moral ruler of the world, virtue his will, and future rewards and punishments. That this was the whole of their religion of course cannot be supposed. They were members of the Christian church and Theophilus was a bishop. They must have shared in the religious life of their fellow Christians, and at least Athénagoras and Theophilus, as we know, worshipped the Logos or Son of God in addition to the Father. But their writings show what they thought of primary importance and to what Christianity might be led when they made Christianity simply a revelation of truth while at the same time recognizing the Jewish Bible as inspired Scripture. No wonder the Gnostics rejected the Old Testament altogether and insisted that Christianity was something new in the world and not the mere reproduction of an older system.

¹ *Cohortatio*, 38.

CHAPTER VII

IRENÆUS

IRENÆUS, bishop of Lyons in Gaul in the latter part of the second century, was one of the few really original and creative thinkers in the history of the church. He has been treated by modern historians so controllingly as an anti-heretical and old Catholic Father, significant for his influence in promoting the conception of apostolic canon, apostolic creed, and apostolic bishop, that as a rule his theology has not been given adequate attention. As a matter of fact he was the most influential of all the early Fathers, not simply institutionally but theologically as well.

Before his time, as we have seen, two streams of thought ran side by side within the Christian church, the one predominantly mystical, the other legal. The great significance of Irenæus lies in the fact that he felt the influence of both these tendencies and in his interpretation of Christianity combined the mystical and legal elements in such a way as to give them a permanent place in Christian theology. Both by temperament and by training he was fitted to do this. Born in Asia Minor he passed his mature life in Gaul and was a frequent visitor in Rome where he seems to have lectured on theology. He was a wide reader and a hard student. At the same time he was deeply interested in the practical side of Christianity and in anything that made for religious devotion and moral purity, as witness the favor he showed the Montanists. He was familiar with the type of Christianity prevalent in Asia Minor and was strongly

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attracted by it. He also knew the writings of Justin Martyr and held him in high esteem. The extent of his acquaintance with the works of the Gnostics is shown by his treatise against them. Though his understanding of them left much to be desired, he had evidently read them diligently and faithfully, and it was largely in reaction against them that he reached his interpretation of the place of Christ and the meaning of Christianity.

Aside from certain epistolary fragments we have only two writings from his pen, one his large work in five books *Against Heresies* (*Adversus hæreses*),¹ the other his brief compend entitled *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching* which was discovered in an Armenian version a few years ago.² It is from the former that we must learn the main features of his theology; the latter is only a summary of current belief and omits much that is most profound and significant in his thought. Unfortunately the larger work is quite unsystematic, being devoted rather to the refutation of the Gnostics than to the presentation of Irenæus' own views. His ideas appear with sufficient clearness scattered here and there throughout the work, but it is only when they are brought together and put into systematic form that their importance becomes apparent. Unfortunately too the work which was written in Greek exists for the most part only in an ancient Latin version, so that we can not always be sure of Irenæus' exact language. But we have many fragments of the original Greek and so are able

¹ I have used Harvey's edition of the *Adv. hæ.*, but for the convenience of the reader references are given according to the chapter divisions of Massuet (the Benedictine edition) and Stieren, which are followed in the translation in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. As these divisions are indicated in the margin of Harvey's edition the passages referred to can be found whichever edition is in the hands of the reader.

² *The Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching* was first published in Armenian with a German version in the *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Gesch. der alt-christlichen Literatur*, vol. 31 (1907). An Eng. trans. by J. Armitage Robinson appeared in 1920.

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to check the translation, and it is evident that it is in the main sufficiently accurate for our purpose. We can at least be sure of the substance of Irenæus' thought even though there may be some doubt in matters of detail.

In presenting Irenæus' system, for he had a well concatenated system of his own, we shall do best to begin with his idea of the nature of salvation, a matter of fundamental importance to him. Of primary significance was his division of salvation into two stages, the one negative, the other positive, the one release from the control of Satan, the other the attainment of immortality. "Because he who formed us in the beginning and sent his Son at the end is one and the same, the Lord being made of a woman fulfilled his command and both destroyed our adversary and perfected man in the image and likeness of God,"¹—that is, he made him immortal, the distinguishing quality of the divine nature being its superiority to death. A man according to Irenæus might be released from the control of Satan, might be saved from sin and never return to it, and yet fall short of immortality or full salvation.² By thus dividing salvation into two parts, a negative and a positive, he made a place, and a consistent place, for the two ideas of Christianity which had lain side by side in the Christian thought of earlier days.

Salvation, Irenæus maintained, is necessary because of Adam's fall. He was the first of the Fathers to emphasize the fall. The contrast with the Apologists at this point is particularly marked and reveals the vast difference between their understanding of human need, and of the meaning of Christianity, and his. The fall, according to Irenæus, had two effects: it brought man under the control of Satan and it deprived him of the divine likeness, or immortality, with which he was originally endowed. If then man is to be

¹ *Adv. hæ.* V. 21 : 2; cf. also III. 18 : 6-7 and IV. 22 : 1.

² Cf. Werner: *Der Paulinismus des Irenæus*, p. 136.

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saved he must be released from the control of Satan and must regain his immortal nature.

Release from the control of Satan is made possible by the work of Christ, a work of perfect obedience. Going step by step up the ladder down which Adam descended when he fell Christ accomplished a work of recapitulation, thus setting man free from the bondage into which he had been brought by sin. A few quotations will illustrate Irenæus' position at this point, and an interesting position it is. "He recapitulated in himself the ancient formation. For whereas through the disobedience of one man sin entered, and death through sin, so also through the obedience of one man righteousness was introduced and will give life to those men who were once dead. And whereas that protoplast, Adam, had his substance from untilled and as yet virgin soil (for God had not yet sent rain and men had not tilled the earth) so he who is the Logos,¹ recapitulating Adam in himself, rightly received from Mary, who was still a virgin, a birth which was a counterpart of Adam's."²

Concerning the temptation: "For as in the beginning the adversary tempted man, though he was not hungry, to transgress the command of God by taking food, at the end he was not able to induce him who was hungry to take that food which came from God."³ Concerning the death Irenæus says that the Lord made a recapitulation "of that disobedience which took place at a tree by that obedience which was accomplished on a tree";⁴ and that as Adam fell on the sixth day of the week, on the same day Christ was crucified.⁵

¹ The old Latin version, which is all we have for the greater part of Irenæus' work, reads Verbum, or Word, where Irenæus himself wrote Logos. To avoid confusion I have retained Logos in rendering him here and elsewhere.

² *Adv. hæer.* III. 21 : 10.

³ *Ibid.* V. 21 : 2.

⁴ *Ibid.* V. 19 : 1.

⁵ *Ibid.* V. 23 : 2.

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The most important events in Christ's life were the temptation and the death, particularly the former because in it his victory over Satan was most apparent. After giving an account of the three stages in the temptation scene Irenæus continues: "For as in the beginning [Satan] persuaded man to transgress the commandment of his Maker and thus got him into his own power (his power being transgression and apostasy with which he bound man), it was necessary that he should be bound by man himself with the same chains with which he had bound man, that man being loosed might return to his own Lord, leaving those bonds by which he had himself been bound, namely sin; for the binding of Satan is the freeing of man."¹

The death of Christ contributed to man's salvation in three ways. It was at once the crowning act of obedience, a recapitulation of Adam's fall, and the payment of a price to Satan in return for man's release.² Of Paul's notion of it as the laying off of the flesh there is no trace. The death of Christ also had other values, for it constituted the great argument against the docetism of the Gnostics — if Christ died he must certainly have been a real man — and it supplied proof, when taken in connection with his resurrection, of our resurrection.³ But as interpreted by Irenæus it had nothing to do with making man immortal. In other words, so far as salvation was concerned, its effect was negative rather than positive.

Christ's perfect obedience, to which reference has been made, was possible, according to Irenæus, only because he was more than a man and was thus able to overcome the devil. "How could he have won the victory over man's powerful adversary who not only had conquered man but also

¹ *Adv. hæ.* V. 21: 3.

² Cf. Marcion's notion that Christ paid a price to the Demiurge. See above, p. 62.

³ Cf. *ibid.* III. 19: 3.

held him under his control — how could he have vanquished him who had conquered and freed him who had been conquered, — unless he was greater than that man who was conquered?"¹ On the other hand Christ's obedience is of service to man only because he was himself a man. "For if man had not overcome the enemy of man, the enemy would not have been justly overcome."²

The benefits of Christ's saving work, by which the power of Satan was broken, are enjoyed only by those that repent and resolve to live righteously, a resolve to which they give expression by accepting Christian baptism. Faith is assumed as a matter of course, for without the faith that God will reward and punish, as he has promised, there would be no adequate motive for repentance. But the emphasis falls rather on repentance and righteousness than on the faith that precedes them. Because of their repentance men are forgiven for their past sins and are thus set free to live a life of righteousness. This they are more likely to do than Adam since they have had experience of the evil effects of sin as he had not. If Christians when they have once been released from Satan fail to live righteously they come again under his control and there is then no further forgiveness and no second escape for them — a survival of primitive Christian rigor not universal in Irenæus' time.

Of free will Irenæus made a great deal as the Apologists had done before him. "From the beginning," he says, "God made man free, with power of his own together with a will of his own that he might voluntarily and not under God's compulsion fulfill the divine will. He placed the power of choice in man as well as in angels (for angels too are rational beings) that those who obeyed might justly possess good, given them indeed by God but preserved by

¹ *Ibid.* IV. 33 : 4.

² *Ibid.* III. 18 : 7.

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themselves. Those, however, who obey not will justly be found without good, and will receive merited punishment." ¹

Irenæus insisted that man is free not only to do but also to believe as he will, so that he may properly be commanded to believe what is true as well as to do what is right. "And not only in works but also in faith God has kept the will of man free and subject to man's own control, saying 'According to thy faith be it unto thee,' thus showing that man's faith is his own because his will is his own." ² The theory that faith is voluntary and within man's own control, and that therefore he may justly be punished for the lack of it or for believing what is false (that is for heresy), has prevailed throughout the centuries within the Catholic church. The theory was older than Irenæus but he was the first of the Fathers to state it in terms so definite and explicit as those just quoted.

The righteousness demanded of the Christian, as understood by Irenæus, was not the spontaneous expression of the character of a redeemed man, as Paul interpreted it, but obedience to an external law — the law of God. This obedience moreover included both faith and works: that is, the acceptance of the teaching of the Apostles as handed down by the apostolic bishops and contained in the apostolic canon of Scripture and rule of faith, and obedience to the natural law written on the hearts of men and formulated in the decalogue.

The relation of this natural law to the ceremonial law of the Jews Irenæus discussed at length,³ and his conclusion has been influential ever since. The natural law, which is identical with the decalogue, is permanently binding upon Christians as well as others. This natural law written upon the hearts of men, and at Sinai upon tables of stone,

¹ *Adv. hæres.* IV. 37 : 1.

² *Ibid.* IV. 37 : 5.

³ *Ibid.* IV. 15-17.

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was reënacted by Jesus Christ. Its essence is love for God and man. The ceremonial law, the law of the Jews, which has no moral significance but is made up of wholly meaningless precepts, was given because men had failed to keep the natural law and for the purpose of training them in obedience. By submitting to the countless requirements of the ceremonial law, in themselves of no moral value, men acquired the habit of obeying. Thus it became a school-master to lead men to Christ.¹ The lesson having been finally learned, the ceremonial law was abrogated and the Christian law took its place — not a new law but the natural law of love to God and man, written on the hearts of men and on the tables of stone, the law which has never been annulled and never will be.

This natural law, which is also the Christian law, is a law of liberty, not because it is less severe than the ceremonial law — Irenæus in fact emphasized the greater severity of Christ's precepts as contained in the fifth chapter of Matthew — but because it requires moral acts, not mere meaningless practices. The latter are burdensome, being intended only for exercise ; the former may be gladly done since they have real worth in themselves. The man under the Jewish law is a slave, under the Christian law a son.

The ceremonial law was thus, according to Irenæus, a mere episode in history, a temporary scheme supplying the Jews with practice in obedience. By obeying the natural law, or the decalogue, a man is justified and saved as he cannot be by obeying the ceremonial law. The latter saves nobody ; the former really saves the man who keeps it. The contrast drawn by Paul between faith and the works of the law Irenæus took to be a contrast not between faith and the works of

¹ The contrast with Paul's interpretation of the law is very striking. The same is true of this whole discussion of law. Paul's doctrine of Christian liberty indeed Irenæus never understood or accepted.

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the natural law but faith and the works of the ceremonial law. Thus the legalism rejected by Paul was legitimatized in Paul's name, and under his ægis acquired a permanent place in Catholic theology.

Irenæus was the first Father to give a reason why the natural law, as he calls it, was binding on Christians while the ceremonial law was not. In doing so he was justifying or rationalizing the common practice of the church of his day. But even more important than this vindication of the common practice was his distinction between the decalogue and the rest of the Jewish law and his identification of the natural law with the former. For not only does the decalogue contain religious as well as moral precepts, but among its religious precepts are peculiarly Jewish enactments such as the prohibition against the making of images and the command to observe the Sabbath. It is Irenæus who was chiefly responsible for the notion that the decalogue is a summary of the natural law and is permanently binding upon Christians, a notion pregnant with consequences even down to our own day.

Up to this point I have been speaking only of the negative aspect of salvation with which was bound up for Irenæus the legal aspect of Christianity. Salvation viewed negatively means escape from the control of Satan and this is achieved by obedience — Christ's obedience and ours. But, as remarked above, salvation meant more to Irenæus than mere release from the control of Satan. A man might free himself from subjection to him — or in other words might be righteous — and yet remain unsaved ; for salvation includes immortality and that requires other preconditions and other agencies. "It is impossible," Irenæus says, "to live without life and the substance of life is participation in God. But to participate in God is to know God and enjoy his goodness. Men therefore shall see God that they may

live, being made immortal by the vision and attaining even unto God." ¹

Participation in God was carried so far by Irenæus as to amount to deification. "We were not made gods in the beginning," he says, "but at first men, then at length gods." ² This is not to be understood as mere rhetorical exaggeration on Irenæus' part. He meant the statement to be taken literally. Salvation he believed involves the transformation of human nature into divine, that is, of mortal nature into immortal, immortality being the distinguishing quality of deity. ³ Thus salvation means deification in a strict sense. This was a common idea in the mystery-religions, ⁴ as has been seen, and while in explicit statement it goes further than Paul and Ignatius and others of their school it is substantially identical with their position. Upon the union of God and man brought about by Christ Irenæus laid the very greatest stress, coming back to it again and again. In it indeed he found the very heart of Christianity and he could hardly say enough about it.

Salvation includes the flesh as well as the spirit. Upon this Irenæus was very insistent. To defend the resurrection of the flesh was the principal aim of the fifth book of his great work. "Wholly vain are those who despise the entire dispensation of God and deny the salvation of the flesh and spurn its resurrection, saying that it is not capable of incorruptibility. But if the flesh is not to be saved the Lord

¹ *Adv. hæ.* IV. 20 : 5-6. See also III. 18 : 7 ; IV. 22 : 1 ; V. 1 : 1.

² *Ibid.* IV. 38 : 4 ; see also III. 6 : 1 ; IV. pref. 4 ; IV. 1 : 1. The idea of deification appears here and there in other Fathers whose general interpretation of Christianity was radically different from that of Irenæus. With them as a rule it was largely conventional and bore no definite meaning, but it was of the very texture of Irenæus' thought.

³ Cf. *ibid.* IV. 38 : 3.

⁴ The idea of union with God, or of the indwelling divine, was not only current in the mysteries but was shared also by many philosophers : Stoics, Cynics, and even Platonists. See, for instance, the interesting quotations from Seneca and Epictetus in Halliday : *The Pagan Background of Early Christianity*, pp. 233 ff.

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did not redeem us with his blood, neither is the cup of the eucharist a communion in his blood, nor the bread which we break a communion in his body.”¹ This meant a radical break with Paul’s idea of salvation. To him, as to the Gnostics, salvation was release from the flesh, not the redemption of it. In insisting upon the resurrection of the flesh Irenæus followed all the first and second century Christians known to us, except Paul and the Gnostics. How he reconciled his position with that of Paul appears in the following passage which has set the fashion for orthodox exegesis ever since. “In every epistle the Apostle clearly testifies that we have been saved through the flesh of the Lord and through his blood. If therefore it is flesh and blood that give us life, it has not been said of actual flesh and blood that they cannot possess the kingdom of God; but the reference is to the above-mentioned carnal deeds which lead man to sin and deprive him of life.”²

As salvation includes not only man’s release from the control of Satan but also his deification it must have another basis than the mere victory of Christ over Satan. This basis Irenæus found in the union in Jesus Christ of the mortal nature of man with the immortal nature of God. Not only was Christ greater than man and stronger than Satan, he was himself God.³ Becoming incarnate he united the nature of God with the nature of man and thus deified the latter, giving it the quality of divinity — immortal life — in which it was lacking. Such passages as the following make Irenæus’ position sufficiently clear. “The Logos of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who on account of his great love became what we are that he might make us what he is himself.”⁴ “How can they be saved unless it be God who

¹ *Adv. her.* V. 2 : 2; cf. V. 14 : 1.

² *Ibid.* V. 14 : 4; cf. V. 2 : 3.

³ Cf. *ibid.* III. 6 : 1; III. 16 : 6; IV. 6 : 7; V. 17 : 3.

⁴ *Ibid.* V. pref.

wrought out their salvation on earth? And how shall man be changed into God unless God has been changed into man?"¹ "It was on this account that the Logos of God became man and he who was the Son of God became the son of man, that man having contained the Logos and having received the adoption might become a son of God. For not otherwise could we have received incorruptibility and immortality unless we had been joined to incorruptibility and immortality. But how could we be joined to incorruptibility and immortality unless first incorruptibility and immortality had been made what we were so that the corruptible might be absorbed by incorruptibility and the mortal by immortality and we receive the adoption of sons."²

Christ must have been really God or he could not have accomplished what was necessary. If he had been merely a subordinate divinity or a being of a different nature from God, his incarnation would not have united God and man and hence the latter would have remained mortal and unsaved. Irenæus, however, had learned from the prologue of the Fourth Gospel and from the Apologists to think of Christ as the incarnation of the Logos.³ And he followed the latter in identifying the Logos with the Son of God.⁴ But to subordinate the Logos to God and to think of him as another being, as the Apologists did in their interest in creation and revelation, was to make his saving work as understood by Irenæus impossible. And so he identified

¹ *Ibid.* IV. 33 : 4.

² *Ibid.* III. 19 : 1; cf. V. 1 : 1, 3.

³ Cf. *ibid.* IV. 20 : 4. "This is his Logos, our Lord Jesus Christ, who in the last times became a man among men that he might join the end to the beginning, that is man to God."

⁴ Cf. *ibid.* III. 19 : 3. In III. 19 : 2 he speaks of the twofold generation of the Son, the one from the Father, the other from the virgin, thus using the term Son of God in a double sense of the preëxistent Logos and of the historic figure Jesus Christ as the Apologists had done.

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God and the Logos, or Son, completely. The Logos is God in the fullest sense, but he is God revealed not God apart from the world and inaccessible to his creatures. The difference is thus a difference of relation not of nature. "Through the Logos himself made visible and palpable the Father was shown forth although not all alike believed in him. But all saw the Father in the Son. For the Father is the invisible of the Son, but the Son is the visible of the Father."¹ And again "But God being all mind and all Logos what he thinks he says and what he says he thinks. For his thought is Logos and Logos is mind and mind comprehending all things is itself the Father."²

It is evident that Irenæus had no need of a Logos as the Apologists had to mediate between God and the universe. He had no philosophical interest and prejudice. His idea of God was such that he could think of him without more ado as becoming incarnate and his incarnation was the thing that chiefly interested him. That he talked of Christ as the incarnation of the Logos rather than of God was therefore due wholly to tradition. While employing the term he put his own interpretation on it — an interpretation differing radically from that of his predecessors.³ Thus he went beyond Paul on the one hand, for the latter made no use of the Logos idea, and the Apologists on the other, for they emphasized the subordination of the Logos and his distinction from the supreme God.

I have said that according to Irenæus Christ was true God, but he was also true man, for otherwise he could not

¹ *Adv. hæ.* IV. 6 : 6.

² *Ibid.* II. 28 : 5; cf. II. 13 : 8; II. 30 : 9; IV. 20 : 11.

³ Irenæus refers to the Logos now and then as a creating and revealing agent, for instance in IV. 20 : 1, 4 and V. 18 : 3, but this was exceptional and does not represent his real position. In IV. 20 : 4 he makes both the Logos and Wisdom, the latter of whom he has identified in the previous paragraph with the Spirit, agents of creation. This shows clearly enough his lack of the philosophical Logos interest.

have united God and man.¹ Irenæus emphasized Christ's possession both of human spirit and of human flesh, and he also made a great deal of the reality of his human birth, in which, as he says, "a mixture and communion of God and man took place."² Moreover he insisted that Christ passed through all the periods of man's life in order to unite men of all ages to God. "For in what way," he says, "could we have shared in the adoption of sons unless we had received from God union with him through the Son? Unless his Logos made flesh had been communicated to us? Wherefore he passed through every age, restoring to all communion with God."³

And again: "He came to save all through himself: all I say that through him are born again unto God, infants and children and boys and youths and old men. Therefore he passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants and thus sanctifying infants; a child for children, thus sanctifying children, and giving them an example of piety, righteousness and obedience; a youth for youths, becoming a pattern to youths and sanctifying them for the Lord. So also he was an old man for old men that he might be a perfect master for all, not only in the exposition of truth but also in the matter of age, at the same time sanctifying old men and being made an exemplar for them."⁴ In the next paragraph Irenæus declares, and undertakes to prove in opposition to those who thought Jesus died at thirty, that he really lived to be fifty years old and that his ministry lasted some twenty years.⁵

It is interesting to compare Irenæus' idea of Christ's work with the idea of Paul. To Paul also the incarnation of

¹ Cf. *ibid.* III. 21 : 4; V. 1 : 2; and *The Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*, § 33.

² *Ibid.* IV. 20 : 4; cf. III. 19 : 3. ³ *Ibid.* III. 18 : 7. ⁴ *Ibid.* II. 22 : 4.

⁵ Irenæus claims the authority of John for this, but we have no other reference to such a tradition.

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Deity was fundamental, but the incarnation was only the first step and had to be followed by death in the flesh and resurrection in the spirit. To Irenæus the death and resurrection of Christ had no such significance. They played no part in the process by which man attains the divine life; they served only to release him from the control of Satan. Divine life is bestowed by the union of God and man brought about in the incarnation, and the flesh as well as the spirit shares in the salvation thus wrought.

Salvation interpreted negatively as release from the control of Satan is appropriated, according to Irenæus, by obedience. Salvation interpreted positively as the attainment of immortality is appropriated in an entirely different way, namely, by union with God, by which we are made partakers of the divine nature and are progressively deified. "Now we receive a certain portion of his Spirit for the perfection and preparation of incorruptibility, little by little becoming accustomed to get and to bear God."¹

According to Paul union with God is brought about by faith. Irenæus also refers to faith as a means of union with the divine, as for instance in the following passage: "As many as fear God and believe in the advent of his Son and establish the Spirit of God in their hearts through faith — such men as these shall rightly be called pure and spiritual and alive unto God because they have the Spirit of the Father who purifies man and raises him up to the life of God."²

This, however, is exceptional and seems to have been largely traditional. Faith to be sure had an essential place according to Irenæus, but with the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists he thought of it rather as supplying the motive for repentance and righteousness. Paul's notion of it as a mystical bond of union between the believer and Christ escaped him as it did most of the early Christians.

¹ *Adv. hæc.* V. 8 : 1.

² *Ibid.* V. 9 : 2.

Again, in agreement with John and the Gnostics, Irenæus made the knowledge of God a means of union with him. "As they that see the light are within the light and share its radiance so they that see God are within God and share his radiance. The radiance moreover vivifies them. Accordingly they that see God shall partake of life. . . . It is impossible to live without life, and the substance of life comes from participation in God. But to participate in God is to know God and enjoy his goodness. Men therefore shall see God that they may live, being made immortal by the vision and attaining even unto God."¹

Even more important was Irenæus' emphasis on baptism and the eucharist as means of union with God. Of baptism he says: "We are taught to believe that baptism is the seal of eternal life and regeneration unto God, in order that we may not be mortal creatures but children of the eternal and unchangeable God."² Still more explicitly of the eucharist: "As the bread which comes from the earth when it receives the invocation of God is no longer common bread but the eucharist, being made of two things, an earthly and a heavenly, so also our bodies when they receive the eucharist are no longer corruptible but have the hope of resurrection unto eternal life."³

This is thorough-going sacramentarianism, and when it is combined, as it was by Irenæus, with the legal conception of salvation and the means of salvation, we have the historic Catholic system complete in all its main features. The ethico-legal and the mystical, the two permanent ele-

¹ *Ibid.* IV. 20 : 5. Irenæus' mystical conception of 'knowledge (which was akin to that of John and the Gnostics) as a means of union with God and hence of salvation had no such influence as his emphasis on obedience and participation in the sacraments. It remained rather the concern of the few while obedience and the sacraments were everyone's affair.

² *Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching*, § 3. In his *Adv. hæ.* I. 21 : 1 he speaks of it as "the baptism of regeneration unto God." (Cf. also III. 17 : 1.)

³ *Adv. hæ.* IV. 18 : 5; cf. also IV. 38 : 1; V. 2 : 2 f.

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ments in historic Christianity, here appear for the first time combined in clear and consistent fashion and in such shape that the church could never lose sight of them. Henceforth it was everywhere recognized that participation in the sacraments and obedience — including both correct faith and right conduct — were necessary to salvation, or in other words, that there must be divine grace and human merit.

It is impossible to exaggerate the significance of Irenæus. He vindicated the new in Christianity, as the Gnostics did too, but he saved the Old Testament for the church as they did not; he explained the relationship between Christianity and Judaism and showed Christians why they were justified in retaining the moral law of the Jews while rejecting the ceremonial; he read the past historically and recognized distinct stages in the process of revelation; he attached fundamental importance to the incarnation which had meant little or nothing to the Apologists and had been denied altogether by the Gnostics; he interpreted Christ's work in such a way as to give saving value to all parts of his life, as no one else did; he supplied a doctrinal basis for the belief in the resurrection of the flesh; and he placed baptism and the eucharist at the very heart of Christianity. Above all, he united the ethical and religious, the legal and the mystical, and so founded historic Catholicism. At once Pauline and anti-Pauline, he reread Paul, who had been rendered suspect by the Gnostics' use of him, in such ways as to make him permanently acceptable to the Catholic church and permanently innocuous. It is Irenæus' interpretation of Paul, in fact, which has been received ever since in the Catholic church, an interpretation that removes all his radicalism and grounds of offence. To no other Father does Catholic theology owe so much.

CHAPTER VIII

A SHORT AND EASY WAY WITH HERETICS ¹

THE spread of Gnosticism, referred to in an earlier chapter, caused a serious crisis in the church of the second century. Though the Gnostics believed themselves true to Christ and Paul their teachings seemed to many Christians utterly subversive of the Christian faith. Their dualism might not have been offensive to any but theologians, and in view of its kinship with Paul's doctrine of flesh and spirit might not have appeared even to them offensive enough to require notice, had it not been for the radical conclusions drawn from it, conclusions of such a nature as to cause wide alarm. Among them were the separation of the redeeming from the creating God which involved the denial of divine providence and the abandonment of the belief that this life of ours is in the hands of God, a belief very dear to Jesus and to many of his followers; also the rejection in whole or in part of the Jewish Scriptures—the Bible of the Christians—from which were drawn religious sustenance and inspiration, moral instruction, and divine prophecies of Christ and Christianity.

The denial of the reality of Christ's earthly life likewise seemed to some a fatal error, though the conviction which was practically universal, that Christ was a divine being who had come down from above, made it uncommonly difficult to believe that he was a real man in the full sense of the word, so that a docetism more or less extreme was widely

¹ A part of this chapter has already appeared in a somewhat different form in *An Outline of Christianity*, vol. II., chap. VI.

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prevalent even beyond Gnostic circles. As a matter of fact docetism alone would never have caused the condemnation of the Gnostics.

More offensive to common Christian sentiment was their division of men into two classes — those who were capable of salvation and those who were not — and their claim that they alone belonged to the former class. This was not only irritating to their opponents but seemed exceedingly dangerous because it denied the possibility of salvation to the mass of Christians and thus removed the principal ground for accepting Christianity and living the Christian life. On the other hand there can be no doubt that it had a great deal to do with the success of Gnostic propaganda, which was carried on chiefly within the Christian church.

Even more alarming was the denial of divine judgment and of the resurrection of the flesh. Multitudes as we know were attracted by Marcion's gospel of a God of pure love and mercy who punishes nobody, but to the leaders of the church it appeared destructive of morality; and the same was true of the denial of the resurrection of the flesh which took all reality, so they believed, out of the future life.

It is not surprising that Gnosticism aroused widespread hostility. Already in the first century teachings identical at one or another point with those of the Gnostics were denounced in Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, in the Pastoral Epistles and in the Epistles of John. But denunciation was not enough. In the middle of the second century when the situation had grown more serious Justin Martyr wrote an anti-heretical work now lost and his example was followed a little later by Irenæus and others. In these works the attempt was made to expose the errors of the Gnostics and to demonstrate their anti-Christian character. This, however, it was not easy to do, for the leading Gnostics were Christians of high purpose, earnest in their religious con-

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victions, and some of them philosophers and theologians of considerable ability. Moreover their teachings had many points of contact with the teachings of Paul and John and some even with the utterances of Jesus himself, as recorded in one or another Gospel. Their dualism for instance found support in Paul's doctrine of spirit and flesh ; their docetism in the belief, common to Paul and John and the great mass of Gentile Christians, that Christ was a divine being who had come down from heaven ; their rejection of the Old Testament and of the God from whom it came in Paul's polemic against the law, as also in Jesus' declaration that no man knows the Father but the Son. For their division of mankind into two classes — those that are capable of salvation and those that are not — they had some warrant in the distinction drawn by Jesus, according to the Fourth Gospel, between children of God and children of the devil, in Paul's doctrine of predestination and the supernatural character of the Christian life, and in the theory that the spiritually endowed cannot sin. In support of their idea of knowledge as higher than mere faith they quoted both Paul and John, and for their claim to possess truth not accessible to the vulgar, they appealed to Christ's use of parables, to his choice of an inner circle of disciples to whom to expound their meaning, and above all to his promise of the Spirit which was to interpret the mysteries left unrevealed by him.

The Gnostics' appeal to the Spirit as authority for their teachings was especially troublesome to their opponents. So much was made in early days of the presence of the Spirit revealing truth and declaring the will of God to his people that it was difficult to deny the claim of the Gnostics, and yet of the falsity and fatal character of their teachings many were thoroughly convinced and were sure that unless their spread could be checked the gospel would perish altogether.

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Denunciation and ridicule and argument were proving insufficient. So long as any man could claim the authority of the Spirit for whatever he chose to say it was impossible to refute him. The only effective remedy seemed to be to set up standards by which the truth of his teaching might be judged; in other words to curtail the freedom of teaching by insisting that it move within certain bounds and meet certain conditions. The test of moral character and conduct which was applied by Hermas to distinguish the true prophet from the false¹ was quite inadequate in the existing situation, for the Gnostic teachers were often as high minded and morally as irreproachable as their opponents.

In writing to the Corinthians Paul had already put limits on the liberty of prophesying, declaring that in the Christian services all should be done for edification.² In the *Didache*, after giving detailed instruction touching Christian life and worship, the author continues, "Whosoever therefore shall come and teach you all these things, receive him. If the teacher, however, be himself perverted and teach another doctrine to the destruction thereof, hear him not; but if to the increase of righteousness and the knowledge of the Lord receive him as the Lord."³ The author of the Johannine Epistles and Ignatius of Antioch insisted that no teacher should be recognized who denied that Jesus had come in the flesh,⁴ and Ignatius would have all instruction put under the supervision of the bishop.⁵

The matter was brought to a head by Irenæus who laid the foundations of the Catholic church as he did also of Catholic theology. In his great work *Against Heresies* he not only endeavored to expose the false teaching of the

¹ Hermas, *Mand.* XI; see above, p. 75.

² 1 Cor. 14.

³ *Did.* 11: 1-2.

⁴ 1 John 4: 2; 2 John 7 ff; Ignatius, *Smyr.* 4, 7.

⁵ Ignatius, *Phil.* 3, 7; *Smyr.* 9.

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Gnostics and to set over against it the truth as he understood it, but he also indicated the safeguards which must be employed if the spread of heresy were to be checked and the pure gospel kept from destruction.

First of all he laid it down as a fundamental principle that all Christian teaching must be in harmony with the teaching of the Apostles, that is, the Twelve and Paul. There is truth, so Irenæus maintained, that is essential to salvation and necessary to the very being of the church. This truth was given by Christ to the Apostles and is to be had from them alone.¹ Thus the present was brought under bondage to the past. Instead of depending on the Spirit residing in the church Christians were to rely on an age already gone and were to take the truth then revealed as permanently authoritative.

But there was a difference of opinion as to what the truth handed down by the Apostles really was. Marcion claimed that he was reproducing teachings of Paul lost sight of by the church at large. Others cited traditions, often of an esoteric character received, so they insisted, from this or that Apostle. Hence it became necessary to determine and define the teaching of the Apostles if the principles of apostolic authority were to be of any help in the situation. It was in the effort to do this that Irenæus appealed to certain books which had been written by the Apostles themselves or under their supervision and might therefore be relied upon for a knowledge of what they taught. "For we have learned," he says, "the plan of our salvation from no others than those through whom the gospel has reached us, which at that time they proclaimed in public, and afterwards by the will of God handed down to us in writings to be the foundation and pillar of our faith. For it is wrong to say that they preached before they had perfect knowledge, as

¹ *Adv. hæ.* III. pref.

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some dare to assert, priding themselves on improving upon the Apostles. For after our Lord had risen from the dead, and the Apostles were clothed with power from on high, when the Holy Spirit came upon them and they were made complete in all things and had perfect knowledge, they departed to the ends of the earth, proclaiming the blessings sent us by God, and announcing celestial peace to men, all of whom equally and individually have the gospel of God. Thus Matthew among the Hebrews issued a gospel in their own language, writing while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the church. After their departure Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also handed down to us in writing what was proclaimed by Peter, and Luke, the follower of Paul, put in a book the gospel preached by him. Later John, the disciple of the Lord who lay upon his breast, published a gospel while living at Ephesus in Asia." ¹

The writings to which Irenæus appealed were not new. Whether they were actually written by the men to whom he ascribed them, at any rate they were well known and highly esteemed among Christians. The point made by Irenæus was not that they were inspired — there were many early Christian writings besides those of the Apostles that were generally regarded as inspired — but that they were apostolic and that their authority was due to this fact.

As was seen in an earlier chapter Marcion had a Scripture canon made up of a gospel of Luke and ten epistles of Paul. This took the place for him and his followers of the Old Testament, the only Bible of most Christians of the day. In opposition to him Irenæus, followed by Tertullian, framed a different canon composed of apostolic writings, a canon as they claimed more complete and accurate than Marcion's. This canon was authoritative not because it was inspired,

¹ *Adv. hæres.* III. 1.

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or because it had to do with Christ and contained his words and works, but because it was apostolic. It arose as a result of the effort to define the teachings of the Apostles, and its historic significance lies in this fact. The criterion of canonicity from that day to this has been not the inspiration of a book, or its Christian character, but its apostolic origin. Of course this meant a closed canon. Other writings of equal religious and ethical value might be produced with the passing of time, but they could not be included in the Bible because they could not be traced back to an Apostle. The straits to which Irenæus was reduced in trying to assign apostolic authors to all the four Gospels are very illuminating. Evidently these particular Gospels were so well established in the confidence of the church that he could not do otherwise than include them in the canon. He even went so far indeed as to argue that in the very nature of the case they could be neither more nor less than four in number.¹

The criterion of apostolicity accounts also for the ascription of certain anonymous writings to one or another Apostle, and to the production of pseudonymous writings bearing an apostolic name. It accounts still farther for the exclusion from the canon of certain writings widely read and highly esteemed among the early Christians, as for instance First Clement and the Shepherd of Hermas, both of which are found in some ancient manuscripts of the New Testament.

The apostolic canon, despite the emphasis laid on it by Irenæus, did not prove adequate to the situation as he was himself obliged to recognize. Referring to the Gnostics he says: "When they are refuted out of the writings they turn round and attack these same writings, alleging that they are not correct or authoritative, and claiming that they are ambiguous, and that the truth cannot be learned from them

¹ *Adv. hæc.* III. II : 8.

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by those who are ignorant of tradition, for it was not delivered in writing but by word of mouth.”¹

The difficulty was not only that there was a difference of opinion as to what writings really were apostolic and authoritative (Marcion's canon for instance was much smaller than that of Irenæus), but that in the writings recognized by Irenæus there were many things which seemed to support the teachings of those he was attacking. Moreover different points of view were represented in the collection of writings which he counted apostolic, and it was possible especially by the use of the allegorical method, in which most of the Gnostics were adepts, to interpret them in various ways.

And so Irenæus appealed to apostolic tradition as the Gnostics also were doing. But he was careful to distinguish the genuine tradition which was alone to be taken as authoritative from the many esoteric traditions current in Gnostic circles. The genuine apostolic tradition, he claimed, was to be found in a particular set of truths handed down from the time of the Apostles and formulated in a brief statement which he called the *regula veritatis* or rule of truth.² By this rule all teaching that claimed to be Christian was to be tried and tested. Thus he says: “Having received this preaching and this faith, as we said above, the church though dispersed through all the world carefully preserves it as if dwelling in one house. And she believes these things in the same way, as if she had one soul and one heart, and she proclaims and teaches them harmoniously and hands them down as if she had one mouth. For there are diverse languages in the world, but the meaning of the tradition is one and the same. Neither do the churches in Germany believe otherwise or transmit anything different, nor those

¹ *Adv. hæ.* III. 2 : 1.

² *Ibid.* I. 22 : 1 ; II. 11 : 1. In III. 3 : 3 ; III. 4 : 2 ; V. 20 : 1 he refers to it as *traditio* ; in I. 10 : 1 ; III. 4 : 2 as *fides*.

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among the Iberians or the Kelts, or in the East or in Egypt or in Libya or at the heart of the world. But as the sun, the creation of God, is one and the same in all the world, thus also the preaching of the truth shines everywhere and enlightens all men that wish to come to a knowledge of the truth. Neither will any one of the rulers of the churches, though mighty in speech, say other things than these, for no one is above his teacher; nor will he who is weak in speech curtail the tradition.”¹

There was exaggeration in these words of Irenæus. As the event proved, the unanimity was not as complete as he claimed. And yet his was no idle boast. From the time of Paul on the church was commonly thought of, not as a mere congeries of detached and independent groups of disciples, but as the one body of Christ. Becoming a member of the Christian community in Ephesus or Alexandria or Rome or anywhere else, the convert became a member of a world-wide confederation of like-minded men and women. It was long before the ideal of unity found expression in organization, but the belief in it was none the less vital and compelling. In appealing to it as he did Irenæus could count on an immediate response from multitudes of Christians.

The passage quoted from him just above shows that he had in his hands a form of words which was apparently used as a baptismal symbol in the church of Rome in his day. It was the original of our so-called Apostles' Creed and ran probably as follows: “I believe in God Father Almighty; and in Christ Jesus his Son, who was born of Mary the Virgin, was crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried, on the third day arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, whence he cometh to judge living and dead; and in Holy Spirit, resurrection of flesh.”²

¹ *Ibid.* I. 10 : 2.

² See my *Apostles' Creed*, p. 100.

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The important thing about this symbol, according to Irenæus, was that it came from the Apostles and reproduced their faith to which all Christian teaching must conform. The fact is, though the beliefs contained in it were not new, the symbol itself dated from the middle of the second century, not from the time of the Apostles, and was apparently framed in opposition to Marcion with the purpose of guarding candidates for church-membership against his errors.¹ Its polemic character is made evident both by what it asserts and even more by what it omits. There is no reference in it to the kingdom of God, the Messiahship of Jesus, his fulfillment of prophecy, his divinity, his preëxistence, his baptism, his teaching, his revelation of God's will and truth, his sinlessness, his works of mercy and power, his victory over demons, the purpose of his death.² Most striking of all, Christ is not referred to as a saviour and nothing whatever is said about salvation. These omissions cannot be accounted for by the brevity of the creed, for it is very detailed in what it says about Christ and even adds the seemingly insignificant word "buried" to the words "crucified under Pontius Pilate." Certainly the creed is very far from being a summary of the church's faith in the first or second or any other century.

As an anti-Marcionitic symbol, however, it was both appropriate and adequate. Over against Marcion's rejection of God, the ruler of this world, is set the avowal "I believe in God Father Almighty" (or more accurately "all-controlling").³ Over against Marcion's assertion that Christ came not from this God but from another one altogether are set the words "and in Christ Jesus his Son." The references to Christ's birth from Mary the Virgin, to his crucifixion

¹ See my *Apostles' Creed*, pp. 46 ff, 106 ff.

² The contrast at this point with Paul's statement of his gospel in 1 Cor. 15 : 3 is noticeable.

³ Cf. *op. cit.* pp. 109 ff.

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and burial, to his resurrection and ascension and session at the right hand of the Father, constitute when taken together a very complete repudiation of Marcion's docetism. And finally there is the explicit assertion of Christ's return for judgment and of the resurrection of the flesh, both of which Marcion denied. The creed indeed meets Marcion's principal errors and contains nothing that cannot be explained as anti-Marcionitic except the reference to the Holy Spirit, and that was due to the fact that the symbol was based upon the baptismal formula which included God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.¹

With this creed, framed in opposition to Marcion, the church was in possession of dogma in the strict sense. The whole subsequent development, at any rate in the west, took it for granted and all later controversies presupposed it. In the east it was not generally current, but the beliefs to which it gave expression were commonly accepted there as well as in the west. To be sure there were those who did not distinguish between the Father and the Son as it did, and the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh was for some time questioned in Alexandria, the resurrection being understood, as for instance by Clement and Origen, in a Pauline or spiritual sense. But of these differences later.

In the meantime — to return to Irenæus — we find that even the baptismal symbol proved inadequate and failed fully to meet the situation with which he was confronted. For one thing its apostolic origin was naturally questioned by those against whom it was employed. And even when its authenticity was admitted, as it was by some of them, it could still be interpreted in such ways as to make it innocuous. "When we appeal," Irenæus continues in the pas-

¹ The baptismal formula on which the creed was based was apparently "God, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit," rather than "Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Cf. *op. cit.* pp. 181 ff.

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sage quoted above, "to that tradition which comes from the Apostles and is guarded by the successive rulers of the churches, they object to tradition, saying that they themselves are wiser not only than the elders but even than the Apostles, and that they have discovered the real truth. . . . It amounts to this then that they now give their assent neither to the Scriptures nor to tradition. It is against such persons, dearest friend, that we have to strive — persons who like slippery serpents endeavor to escape first on this side and then on that. Wherefore they must be resisted on every side that if possible by cutting off their retreat we may convert them to the truth. For though it is not easy for a soul involved in error to repent, it is not altogether impossible to escape error when truth is set in contrast with it. Thus in every church it is within the power of all that may wish to know the truth to ascertain the tradition of the Apostles manifest in all the world. And we are able to enumerate those whom the Apostles appointed bishops in the churches and to trace their succession down to our own time. They neither taught nor knew such things as are raved about by those of whom we have been speaking. For if the Apostles had known hidden mysteries which they were teaching the perfect in secret and apart from the multitude, they would have delivered these mysteries especially to those to whom they committed the churches. For they wished that their successors whom they intrusted with the government should be perfect and blameless in all things." ¹

Thus in the emergency that faced him Irenæus appealed both from apostolic Scripture and apostolic creed to the living voice of the bishops who presided over the churches founded by the Apostles and had received their office in regular succession from them. The essential characteristic of these bishops as of canon and creed was their apostolicity.

¹ *Adv. hæ.* III. 2-3.

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It was this that gave them their authority as guardians of apostolic truth. Not their personal character or endowments but their official position was the important thing. As successors of the Apostles they had received from them the grace they needed to enable them to transmit and interpret apostolic truth and hence to test and pass authoritatively upon all Christian teaching. They became the official guarantors and interpreters both of canon and of creed, and if any doubt arose as to the extent or the meaning of either they were depended on to decide the matter.

Clement of Rome had appealed to the apostolic appointment of the officers of the church in opposition to those who would remove them from office. But Irenæus was the first so far as we know to appeal to it in support of episcopal infallibility. According to his theory the bishops were not ordinary officials chosen by the people and responsible to them; they owed their appointment to the Apostles, by regular succession from the original appointees, and possessed an authority quite independent of the churches over which they ruled. They were bishops by divine right and were subject to no control except that of the collective episcopate speaking in synods and councils. Irenæus took for granted general consent in matters of faith at any rate on the part of the bishops of the apostolic churches. But time showed that bishops often disagreed with one another and hence when the disagreements became serious councils were called to determine the matters in dispute. Speaking for the collective episcopate as they did these councils were recognized as infallible, and any bishop refusing to conform was deprived of his office and lost the right to declare and interpret apostolic truth. To these councils it belonged to determine the extent of the Scripture canon and the form of the creed which was to bind the conscience of the church. They could even frame new creeds or promulgate new doc-

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trines as need arose, the assumption being that such creeds and dogmas were only the formulation of truths delivered by the Apostles and implicit from the beginning in the faith of the church.

The principles enunciated by Irenæus found speedy acceptance in the west and ultimately in the east as well. As a result it became possible to deal with heretics in summary fashion. It was no longer necessary to wait upon the slow and difficult process of convincing them of their errors and showing them wrong to the satisfaction of all believers. Episcopal condemnation was enough to prove the falsity of their teachings and to guard all devout Catholics against them. Declared by episcopal authority to be heretics they were excluded from the church and regarded as worse than heathen. Thus the Gnostics and Marcionites were got rid of in the second and third centuries and where they still continued to exist it was in separate churches or conventicles of their own.

Nothing could well be more complete and effective than the principles of Irenæus as they were thus carried out to their logical conclusion after his day. Upon them the Catholic church was built — that church which has continued ever since unchanged in essence even when divided between east and west.

Where Irenæus' principles were accepted of course free theological speculation was no longer possible. All Christian theology must conform to the teaching of the Apostles and must therefore move within circumscribed limits. It might seem in these circumstances as if farther progress were out of the question, but the event proved otherwise. As a matter of fact in the Old Roman Symbol and in other ancient creeds the teaching of the Apostles was left undefined upon most subjects and there thus remained large room for speculation. Irenæus himself drew no distinction between

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faith and knowledge, and endeavored to trace the whole of his theological system back to the Apostles: if it was not apostolic it was not true. But his system did not find a place in the symbol and so although his doctrine of salvation and of Christ's work was widely accepted it was not made obligatory.

Indeed so far as the Old Roman Symbol went it bound the church to nothing beyond the rejection of Marcionism and Gnosticism. To be sure the recognition of the bishops as guarantors and interpreters of apostolic truth made it possible to hold the church to doctrines not explicitly defined in the creed; but on the other hand it also made it possible so to interpret the creed as to bring it into accord with current thought. In other words the appeal to episcopal authority meant the substitution of elasticity for rigidity. Limits there were within which the thought of the Catholic church has always moved, but room there was too, at any rate until the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, for a large measure of divergence upon a great variety of subjects.

The recognition of the apostolic as the norm of all Christian truth was a momentous step. The appeal was thenceforth to the past. What was apostolic, that is, what belonged to the first two generations of the church, was alone Christian. In primitive days — even well on into the second century — there were living prophets to whom Christians could look for a knowledge of the truth. Through them the Spirit was speaking and to appeal to the past was quite unnecessary. The Shepherd of Hermas is a capital illustration of this attitude. But in the latter part of the century all was changed. It now became necessary to trace everything — doctrine, ethics, polity — back to the Apostles. If a belief or a practice was not apostolic it was not Christian. The composition of pseudonymous writings containing the

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alleged teachings of this or that Apostle on various subjects, doctrinal and practical, was inevitable and was not confined to the Gnostics. Much of this pseudonymous literature was produced in perfect good faith. The Apostles were the divinely appointed founders of the church and they must have declared God's will and truth on all matters of importance to Christians.

Of the Apostles themselves little was known in the second century. Aside from Peter, John and Paul they were shadowy and obscure figures; and even about Peter and John there was only meagre information. It was too late to recover a knowledge of their lives and activities, but it seemed imperative to know more about them, and hence traditions of all sorts sprang up and legend took the place of history. An elaborate apocryphal literature was created, filled with tales of their lives and deeds and particularly of their heroic deaths.

The establishment of Irenæus' principles meant the permanent loss of the primitive trust in present-day revelation. It was now believed that while the Apostles still lived, there had been direct communications from God; but after they passed from the scene there were no more. Under the pressure of heresy faith gave way to fear and the present was put under bondage to the past. Not new revelations were now counted upon, opening the way to fresh disclosures of God's will and truth, but a revelation given once for all in days long gone and never to be added to or altered. Of course such a change could not have come about in a period when the sense of the presence of the Spirit was still everywhere vivid and when prophets were still common. The truth is that the primitive enthusiasm had been waning for some generations before Irenæus made his suggestions for the crushing of heresy. This is made abundantly clear by much of the extant literature of the second century and by

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the immediate and widespread favor which greeted his proposals. They could certainly not have prevailed had it been otherwise. But the primitive enthusiasm — the primitive trust in a present Spirit and reliance upon living prophets — did not disappear without a protest. That protest found most emphatic expression in an interesting and significant movement known as Montanism. To that movement we must now turn.

CHAPTER IX

MONTANISM

THE movement known as Montanism started in Phrygia soon after the middle of the second century. It took its name from Montanus, a former priest of Cybele, who had become a convert to Christianity. He was a man of an enthusiastic and neurotic temperament, a marked psychic, of the type that sees visions and hears voices. He believed that the age of the Spirit foretold in the Gospel of John had dawned and that he was himself the Spirit's chosen mouth-piece and agent. He believed too that the time was near at hand when Christ would return to set up his promised kingdom and that he was commissioned to announce its approach and to summon Christians to prepare themselves for it by abandoning their ordinary pursuits, freeing themselves from all earthly entanglements and gathering at Pepuza, a small town in Phrygia, there to await the appearance of the Lord. Montanus was a strict ascetic and preached asceticism of an extreme sort as a means of preparation for the approaching consummation. Among his earliest disciples were two women, Maximilla and Priscilla (or Prisca) who left their families to assist him with his propaganda. They laid claim, as he did, to immediate revelations from above and were recognized together with him as the original prophets of the sect.

Accompanied by them Montanus went about Phrygia proclaiming the return of Christ and gathering large numbers of followers. Such premillenarian movements have always

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proved popular, and the phenomena attending them have been similar in every age, though the leaders have not often made claims as extravagant as those of Montanus. He and his fellow-prophets believed themselves to be wholly under the control of the Spirit, mere instruments through which he spoke, and their prophesying was commonly done in a state of suspended consciousness — an ecstasy or trance. Writing as a Montanist Tertullian says in his work against Marcion: "For when a man is taken possession of by the Spirit, especially when he beholds the glory of God or when God speaks through him, he is necessarily deprived of his senses because he is overshadowed by the power of God, concerning which there is a question between us and the psychics." ¹

An anonymous opponent of the Montanists quoted by Eusebius says of Montanus, "He lost control of himself and falling suddenly into a sort of frenzy and ecstasy he raved and began to babble and utter strange things, prophesying in a manner contrary to the constant custom of the church handed down by tradition from the beginning." ² The fact is, notwithstanding what the author says about its novelty, this sort of thing was sufficiently common in the church of an earlier time, when speaking with tongues and ecstatic prophecy were everyday occurrences, but it had long ceased to be familiar.

The general manner of the Montanistic prophets and the extravagant claims they made are indicated clearly enough by such utterances as the following: "Purity works harmony and they see visions, and turning their faces inward they also hear audible voices as salutary as they are occult" — a saying attributed by Tertullian to Priscilla.³ Epiphanius quotes from Montanus, "Behold man is like a lyre and

¹ *Adv. Marcionem*, IV. 22.

² Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* V. 16.

³ Tertullian, *De exhortatione castitatis*, 10.

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I fly to him as a plectrum. Man sleeps and I awake. Behold it is the Lord that throws the hearts of men into an ecstasy and gives them a heart.”¹ “Neither an angel nor a messenger, but I, the Lord God, the Father, am come.”² “I the Lord God, the Almighty, am dwelling in man.”³ And from Maximilla, “Do not listen to me, but listen to Christ,”⁴ as if it were Christ who was speaking through her.

The Montanists were entirely orthodox in their theology.⁵ The truth is their interests were not theological but practical. They were opposed to Gnosticism chiefly because of its intellectual aspect, and though they were ascetics as most of the Gnostics also were, their asceticism was based rather on the imminence of the second coming than on a dualism of spirit and matter. They were thoroughly conservative in their attitude, reproducing in a remarkable degree the spirit of primitive days which had largely disappeared. This is seen both in their recognition of the presence of the Holy Spirit, revealing God’s will and truth through living prophets, and in their emphasis on the nearness of Christ’s return to set up the millennial kingdom. Why they departed from the common tradition and chose the insignificant town of Pepuza⁶ as the place of Christ’s return, we do not know. Referring to Pepuza, Priscilla, or another Montanistic prophetess Quintilla, declared: “Christ came to me in the form of a woman in shining garments and taught me wisdom and revealed to me that this place

¹ Epiphanius, *Panarion* XLVIII. 4. The same figure of the lyre and the plectrum is used in speaking of the O. T. prophets by the author of the Pseudo-Justinian *Cohortatio* 8.

² Epiphanius, XLVIII. 11.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.* XLVIII. 12.

⁵ Cf. Tertullian, *De jejuniis*, 1; *De virginibus velandis*, 2; *De monogamia*, 2.

⁶ Or Pepuza and Tymion according to Apollonius, quoted by Eusebius, *H. E.* V. 18 : 2.

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is holy and that here Jerusalem will come down from heaven.”¹ Later when the movement had spread beyond Phrygia, Pepuza was abandoned in favor of Jerusalem, the traditional site.

The reversion of the Montanists to primitive principles is seen also in their denial of the forgiveness of post-baptismal sins and their refusal to readmit to the church those who had been excluded because of serious offences. There were others in their day besides the Montanists who still maintained this primitive attitude, as for instance, Irenæus, but it had been widely abandoned. The reassertion of it by Montanus was of a piece with the general rigor of his moral principles. He insisted upon the severest discipline, excluding from the church all that were unwilling or unable to live in accordance with the rules which he laid down on the basis of revelation. The Spirit, speaking through him and other Montanistic prophets, made fasting of an extreme type obligatory, also unworldliness in conduct, modesty and simplicity in dress, and abstention from all sorts of amusements, the theatre, public games and the like. Strict chastity was also required and second marriages were forbidden. Apollonius, quoted by Eusebius (*H.E.* V. 18:2), says that Montanus taught the dissolution of marriage. This, however, does not mean that he forbade marriage altogether as Marcion and some others did. He encouraged celibacy, to be sure, but apparently refrained from making it obligatory.² Great emphasis moreover was laid on martyrdom as a means of gaining the highest rewards. The combination of spiritual ardor with moral discipline of the most rigorous kind is curious but by no means without parallel. In course of time, however, the legalism was bound to dampen the enthusiasm and check the freedom of the Spirit. This happened with

¹ Epiphanius, XLIX. 1.

² See Tertullian's tracts, *Ad uxorem*, *De monogamia*, *De exhortatione castitatis*.

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Montanism as it did with the primitive church and as it has frequently happened with other movements in other ages.

As might have been expected Montanism made a powerful appeal particularly to Christians of an ascetic tendency and of an enthusiastic temperament. It spread very rapidly throughout Asia Minor and within a few years made its way to other parts of the Empire as well. It found a warm welcome in Southern Gaul and North Africa, and in Rome it almost won the official support of Bishop Eleutherus late in the second century. Its greatest convert was the celebrated Tertullian of Carthage, who was impressed by its asceticism, its primitive enthusiasm, and its emphasis on the presence of the Spirit, and who saw in it a mighty barrier against the growing worldliness and laxity of the church. Several of his tracts were written after he became a Montanist and while more extreme they breathe much the same spirit as earlier writings from his pen. It is from them that we gain most of our knowledge of the movement.

Notwithstanding its conservative character and the strong appeal it made in many quarters Montanism encountered wide distrust and hostility. The manner of the prophets proved offensive to the more sober-minded. A certain Alcibiades, otherwise unknown, wrote a work against the Montanists, now lost, in which, according to Eusebius, he showed that a prophet ought not to speak in an ecstasy. "But the false prophet," Eusebius quotes him as saying, "falls into an ecstasy in which he is without shame or fear. Beginning with willing ignorance he passes on, as has been stated, to involuntary madness of soul. They cannot show that any one either of the old or the new prophets was thus carried away in spirit."¹ This indicates how far the church had travelled since primitive days.

¹ *H.E. V. 17 : 2.* This lost anti-Montanistic work is commonly ascribed by scholars to Miltiades; but see the note in my edition of Eusebius, *ad loc.*

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The opponents of the Montanists even went so far as to accuse their prophets of being under the influence of Satan. Exorcism was therefore frequently tried upon them to their bitter resentment. Against those who treated them with such indignity they might have turned the strong words of the *Didache* had they been acquainted with it as there is no sign they were. "Do not test or examine," it is said there, "any prophet speaking in spirit (*i.e.* in an ecstasy), for every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven."¹

More offensive than the manner of the Montanistic prophets was the matter of their prophecies. The belief in a millennial kingdom so common in the earliest days of the church was still shared by many, but as time passed and the consummation was delayed, it dropped more and more out of mind and to bring it into the forefront as the Montanists did and to insist that Christians must abandon their homes and occupations and gather in Pepuza, or anywhere else, to await the coming of Christ seemed to the more sober-minded fanatical and absurd.² Moreover the extreme asceticism of the movement, made obligatory as it was upon all, was directly in conflict with the growing moderation of the church. Two opposite principles indeed were represented respectively by the Montanists and by the ecclesiastical authorities of the day. The former stood for the primitive principle of the complete separation of the church from the world, the latter wished to break down the barriers between them. It had come to be widely recognized that the consummation lay in the distant future and that the duty of Christians was not to remain apart waiting for the return

¹ *Did.* II: 7. When the *Didache* was first discovered half a century ago some scholars took it to be a Montanistic document; but it was actually produced a generation or more before the time of Montanus.

² Because the Montanists made large use of the Apocalypse of John certain Christians of the late second century rejected it altogether, and some of them even claimed it was of Montanistic origin.

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of Christ, but to take possession of the world for him. Success in such an enterprise seemed to depend on moderating the early rigor and making it possible to win and retain converts on easier terms than in primitive days. As a result the Christian circle was gradually transformed from a conventicle to a world-church.

The unpopularity of the Montanists was increased by their claim, not uncommon among such sects, that they were on a higher level than the members of the church at large upon whom they looked down with contempt as corrupt and worldly and insensible to nobler things. In agreement with the Gnostics they drew a sharp line of distinction between themselves and other Christians, arrogating to themselves the title "spiritual," and calling all others "psychical" or "animal."¹

Most offensive of all to the ecclesiastical authorities was the claim of the Montanists that to their inspired prophets all must yield respect and obedience. To substitute for the regularly appointed officials of the church irresponsible persons who might arise at any time and claim to declare authoritatively the will and truth of God was to undermine the organization and put in jeopardy the very existence of the church. In the conflict with Gnosticism the line between the apostolic and post-apostolic ages had been sharply drawn; to erase that line in the interest of continuing revelation and inspiration seemed dangerous in the extreme. Moreover in the same conflict resort was had to the authority of the bishops as successors and representatives of the Apostles; to repudiate that authority in the interest of present-day prophets, Montanistic or any other, was to throw the door open again to heresy of every sort. And hence not without considerable hesitation, due to the devotion and high character of the Montanists, they were

¹ Cf. Tertullian, *De monogamia*, I.

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finally condemned, first in Asia Minor, later in Rome, North Africa and other parts of the church both east and west. Thenceforth the movement went on apart from the main body of the church, but it gradually degenerated and after some centuries disappeared altogether.

Though condemned, Montanism had large influence on the development of Christian thought and life and it is for this reason it has been described here. For one thing it brought the gift of prophesying into disrepute. As already remarked prophecy had been gradually waning and the number of Christian prophets had been much reduced. Aside from the Montanistic prophets we hear of no others in the latter part of the second century. But only in the conflict with the Montanists did the church at large come to recognize that the age of prophecy was past. In condemning their false prophets the Catholic church really condemned all prophecy, that is, all contemporary prophecy. Thenceforth the claim to prophetic gifts was commonly regarded as a sign of mania or of blasphemy.

Again, the strict discipline of the Montanists strengthened by way of reaction the tendency of the church at large toward moral laxity. Indeed the Montanistic conflict was a milestone in the development of ecclesiastical discipline from the rigor of primitive days to the moderation of the third and following centuries. A double standard of morality gradually emerged, one for the clergy—the spiritual élite—the other for the mass of Christians. The strictness demanded of all in the early days was now demanded of the former only, and the rank and file were allowed to live on a lower plane, avoiding only the grosser forms of sin. Both monasticism and clerical celibacy were rooted in this double standard of morality, but their development belongs to the history of Christian life rather than Christian thought and cannot be traced further here.

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Another effect of the Montanistic conflict was to discredit chiliasm or premillenarianism. Common in the primitive church and made a fundamental tenet by the Montanists premillenarianism, at least of the grosser type, came under suspicion when they were condemned. Thenceforth though it was still cherished by many Christians, including even the great bishop Cyprian of Carthage in the middle of the third century, it was commonly frowned upon by the ecclesiastical authorities and gradually came to be regarded as a mark of ignorance or fanaticism. It was not specifically condemned as a heresy, but it was generally discredited and no longer played an important part in the thinking of the church at large. The contrast between the primitive church and the church of later generations is perhaps nowhere more striking than at this point.

In general the effects of the Montanistic crisis were to strengthen the ecclesiastical organization, to enhance the authority of the bishops, and to emphasize the line of demarcation between the apostolic and the post-apostolic age, in other words, its effects were similar to those of the Gnostic controversy. Though so unlike Gnosticism it produced the same sort of reaction. Appearing when the earlier conflict was well under way and had already resulted in important changes Montanism confirmed these changes. The Catholic church which emerged from the struggle with Gnosticism was strengthened and made even more self-conscious by the struggle with Montanism. The conviction of that church's divine authority and exclusive rights was thenceforth firmly established.

BOOK TWO

CHRISTIAN THOUGHT IN THE EAST FROM
CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA TO JOHN OF
DAMASCUS

CHAPTER X

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

WITH the exception of Rome Alexandria was the largest, wealthiest and most splendid city of the Roman Empire. As a commercial centre it even surpassed Rome itself. Its inhabitants were chiefly Greeks, Jews and native Egyptians, but the first outnumbered the others and gave a predominantly Greek character to the place. In the time of Clement it was the most important Greek city in the empire and the intellectual metropolis of the Hellenistic world. It was as cosmopolitan intellectually as commercially and felt the influence of widely diverse currents of thought. It had an important university and an immense library. Scientific study was carried on with great zeal, and its medical school was the most famous in the empire. Philosophy too was diligently pursued and among the residents of the city were many of the leading thinkers and scholars of the age.

Religiously the city was as important as it was intellectually. All sorts of cults — Egyptian, Asiatic, Greek, Roman — were represented and there were many splendid temples and a large number of Jewish synagogues. The Jews indeed had found a second capital in Alexandria and the contacts between Judaism and Hellenism were closer there than anywhere else. It was in Alexandria that the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament was produced. It was there too that Philo, the great Jewish philosopher, made his home a century and more before the time of Clement.

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Christianity reached Alexandria at an early day, but we know nothing about its fortunes there until after the middle of the second century. At that time there was a flourishing theological school in the city with Pantænus, the teacher of Clement, at its head. Clement himself was born of heathen parents, where and when we do not know, and was converted to Christianity in mature life. The circumstances of his conversion are also unknown to us. He had an extensive education of which he tells us something at the beginning of his *Stromateis*. After studying with a number of teachers in different parts of the world he found his way to Alexandria where he became a pupil of Pantænus and his successor as head of the theological school.

How much Clement took from Pantænus it is impossible to say. He speaks of him in terms of respect and affection but never quotes him, and while Pantænus is reported to have been trained in the Stoic philosophy he left no writings and we have no means of discovering what his opinions were. With Clement himself we are well acquainted, for he was a voluminous writer and some of his most important works are still extant. We have for instance the *Protrepticus*,¹ a missionary document attacking current religion and morals and urging conversion to Christianity; the *Pædagogus*,² an elementary manual of morals and manners addressed to Christians, particularly to the young and immature; and the *Stromateis*, or *Miscellanies*, discussing all sorts of subjects, Biblical, ethical and theological. In addition there is a striking tract on the proper attitude toward wealth and the other goods of life entitled *What Rich Man Can be Saved?* Other works which exist only in fragments it is not necessary to mention.

In the *Protrepticus* Clement appears as an evangelist

¹ Προτρεπτικός πρὸς Ἕλληνας : commonly called *Exhortation to the Heathen*.

² Παιδαγωγός : commonly called *The Instructor*, but *Tutor* would be better.

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interested to win converts to Christianity. The work is commonly spoken of as an apology as if the aim were to defend Christianity against its enemies and detractors as in the apologies of Justin Martyr and Tertullian. This, however, is to mistake its purpose. It belongs rather to the propagandist literature of the church and is one of the very few evangelistic or missionary tracts left to us from ancient times. The work contains a scathing denunciation of the current religions of the day, particularly the mystery-cults, with which is contrasted the true religion of the Logos. In eloquent and often moving terms the readers are urged to abandon the former and embrace the latter which alone brings salvation and immortality. For all its display of learning and its rhetorical and often bombastic style it is immediately practical in its aim and reveals Clement as a devout and eager seeker after souls. The traditional portrait of him as a theologian primarily interested in speculative questions finds no support in this evangelistic tract.

The same is true of the *Pædagogus*, addressed not to heathen but to Christians. In it Clement devotes himself to the instruction of the rank and file in morals and manners. It too is a practical document, as far as possible from a work on theology. The first of its three books sets out the importance of right living and has much to say about the Logos or *Pædagogue* who not only exhorts men to become Christians but instructs them in the Christian life, showing them how they should comport themselves and reproving and leading them to repentance when they go wrong. The paragraphs about the divine Logos or Son of God contain many beautiful and eloquent passages. Clement insists throughout that salvation is for all believers, men, women and children, the simple-minded and the ignorant as well as the educated and the intellectually endowed, if they but follow the precepts of the Instructor and live as Christians

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should. In the second and third books he sets forth in detail the conduct required of them, dealing at considerable length with eating, drinking, table manners, house furnishings, clothing, conversation, exercise, bathing, wealth, luxury, public shows, and the relation of the sexes. Matters of etiquette, as we should call them, bulk almost as large as matters of morals. The two indeed are not distinguished. In general the work inculcates a simple, modest, chaste and refined way of living in which the common decencies of life are observed and all excess and display avoided. There is nothing specifically Christian in the conduct recommended and there is less asceticism than in most patristic writings. Clement however insists, in agreement with other Christian teachers of the age, that the theatre and all other public spectacles are to be eschewed altogether. Much of the discussion and many of the prohibitions suggest that the church of Alexandria was largely recruited from the well-to-do, but this must not be pressed too far, for denunciation of luxury, extravagance and display has always found a sympathetic hearing among poor as well as rich.

Toward the end of the *Pædagogus*¹ Clement speaks of the "Didascalos," or "Teacher," another work which he hoped to write. It was apparently to be a treatise on theology for the use of mature and educated Christians who had advanced beyond the elementary stage of Christian living. This projected work is commonly identified with the *Stromateis* which is taken to be the final and theological part of one great work of which the *Protrepticus* and the *Pædagogus* are the first two parts. The identification, however, is beset with difficulties. The *Stromateis* deals much more largely with morals than with theology and is

¹ *Pædagogus* III. XII, 97. The references in this chapter are to Stählin's edition of Clement's work. In *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* the divisions into books and chapters are the same as in Stählin but the numbering of paragraphs is omitted.

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of so miscellaneous a character as to be quite out of line with the other two works. It seems better to suppose that when Clement, after completing the *Protrepticus* and *Pædagogus*, came to write his projected work on theology, he found so many preliminary matters needing discussion that he departed from his original design, intending afterward to return to it — an intention interrupted by his death.¹ At any rate while there is more theology in the *Stromateis* than in the *Protrepticus* and *Pædagogus*, and while more mature and advanced readers are addressed than in those two works, it fails altogether to do what was promised and we are left not only without Clement's system of theology but also without his opinions upon many subjects that his own words had led us to expect he would discuss in the *Didascalos*.

In Clement's time the situation in the Alexandrian church was critical. The Gnostics had brought theology into general disrepute and had led multitudes of devout Christians to fear the contamination of the Christian faith by heathen philosophy. In many places a like distrust of philosophy would have mattered little, but in Alexandria where all schools of philosophy were at home and where interest in ultimate questions was eager and widespread it was quite otherwise. If the Christian church declined to allow the discussion of such questions Christianity's appeal to the intellectual classes was gone and its influence over them permanently destroyed. This must seem intolerable to a man of Clement's temperament. He could not be content to see Christianity the religion only of the uneducated and uncultured as it seemed in danger of becoming. It was particularly to meet this situation that he wrote his *Stromateis*

¹ See de Faye, *Clément d'Alexandrie*, part I, chap. 4. For other views about the composition of the three works and their relation to each other see Harnack: *Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur*, Bk. III. chap. 1; and Tollinton, *Clement of Alexandria*, vol. II. pp. 324 ff.

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and it was because of it that he thought it necessary to publish the *Stromateis* before the Didascalos.

Clement differed with the heretical Gnostics in making Christianity primarily a matter of faith, not of knowledge. The simple believer is saved however ignorant he may be.¹ Of the necessity and adequacy of faith for salvation Clement had much to say. Faith is the first step, then follow fear, hope, repentance, accompanied by temperance and patience and leading to love and knowledge.² In one passage he speaks of faith as a comprehensive acquaintance with the essentials of Christianity and of gnosis as the demonstration of them.³ But though he thus insisted on the necessity and adequacy of faith he believed also in the importance of knowledge, particularly a knowledge of the deeper mysteries and profounder truths of the gospel which are veiled from the multitude.⁴ He was convinced moreover that this could be gained only by the educated and only with the help of philosophy.

Like salvation itself this knowledge presupposes faith. Faith indeed is the foundation underlying all knowledge and without it that apprehension of the truth to be desired by Christians,⁵ cannot be attained. The first principles upon which all demonstration rests and without which it is impossible to reach farther truth cannot be proved, they can only be believed. Consequently the Gnostic must have faith as a Gnostic not simply as a Christian.⁶ But for the knowledge required faith is not enough; there must be education and particularly training in philosophy. Without the latter any approach to an understanding of the deeper mysteries and

¹ *Pædagogus* I. vi.

² *Stromateis* Bk. II. chap. vi, 31.

³ *Ibid.* VII. x, 57.

⁴ *Ibid.* V. iv-ix. "To know is more than to believe," he says in *Strom.* VI. xiv, 109.

⁵ *Ibid.* V. i.

⁶ *Ibid.* II. iv, 13.

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profounder truths of Christianity is quite out of the question. Hence Clement wrote his *Stromateis* primarily to show the importance of philosophy and to remove the common prejudice against theology. It was not his wish to attack the Christians that cherished this prejudice, but rather to persuade and reassure them. His temper as a rule was admirable and he treated them kindly and without sarcasm, though in one passage, replying to the objection that knowledge is apt to undermine and destroy faith, he remarks that faith so easily lost is better lost!¹

Almost at the beginning of the *Stromateis* Clement insists that philosophy came from God and was given to the Greeks as a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ as the law was a schoolmaster for the Hebrews.² At times, in agreement with Justin Martyr, he traced philosophy directly to the Logos who had been at work in all ages revealing truth to Greeks and barbarians as well as Jews.³ In this connection he showed a commendable breadth of mind, being ready to recognize the truth wherever he found it even outside the Jewish and Christian revelation. "By images and by direct vision," he says, "those Greeks who have philosophized accurately see God."⁴ Not the source but the content of truth determines its value. "Let those who say that philosophy took its rise from the devil know this, that the Scripture says that the devil is transformed into an angel of light. When about to do what? Plainly when about to prophesy. But if he prophesies as an angel of light he will speak what is true."⁵

¹ *Strom.* VI. x, 81.

² *Ibid.* I. v, 28.

³ Cf. *ibid.* I. xiii, 57.

⁴ *Ibid.* I. xix, 94.

⁵ *Ibid.* VI. viii, 66. The words "All that came before Christ were thieves and robbers," applied by many Christians to the philosophers, referred, according to Clement, not to them but to the lying prophets who were teachers of falsehood, and even they spoke some truth. (*Strom.* I. xvii, 85.)

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It is passages like this that have given Clement a reputation for tolerance and broad-mindedness above that of most of the Fathers. But he was also a defender of the faith and he followed the Jewish philosopher Philo and most of the Christian apologists in claiming that the Greek philosophers got the truth so far as they had it from the Old Testament.¹ This was no passing notion. On the contrary Clement insisted on it frequently and had much to say about the antiquity of Moses and the prophets and their superiority to all the Greeks that had borrowed from them. But even so philosophy came from God, whether directly or indirectly, and its pædagogical value was not to be overlooked.²

Philosophy not only had its place in the divine economy before the coming of Christ, it is still of value; indeed it is indispensable for anyone who would advance beyond the elements of the gospel to the higher ranges of Christian truth and life. Without philosophy a man may be a believer, but he cannot comprehend the things of faith. While philosophy is not necessary to salvation it fortifies and protects the truth and in many cases supplies the preliminary training required for faith.³ Moreover, to distinguish good from bad a man must have knowledge; not by nature but by learning men become good as they become physicians and pilots.⁴ In the *Pædagogus* Clement insisted that faith was enough and that the simple Christian and his more learned brother stood on one plane. But in the *Stromateis*, while nowhere denying the salvation of the immature and uneducated, he made much of the difference between the two classes of Christians and of the importance of going on from the lower stage to the higher.

Clement was no indiscriminate admirer of Greek philosophy and philosophers. He likened the Sophists to old shoes

¹ *E.g. Strom.* II. xviii.

² *Cf. ibid.* VI. v, 42.

³ *Ibid.* I. xx.

⁴ *Ibid.* I. vi, 34.

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which are all worn out except the tongue.¹ Some systems, as for instance the materialism of Democritus and the hedonism of Epicurus, he denounced in unmeasured terms. And even Platonism, ranked by him as by most of the Fathers highest of all, he was quite ready to criticise. When he spoke of the utility of philosophy he did not mean "the Stoic philosophy or the Platonic or the Epicurean or the Aristotelian, but whatever was well said by each of these sects, inculcating righteousness together with pious science."²

With the same end in view of disarming the current prejudice against learning and philosophy Clement laid stress on the moral and religious effects of the higher knowledge he was defending.³ It was not mere barren speculation he was talking about and not mere doctrine divorced from life. On the contrary the ideal Christian — the Christian who has gone on from faith to knowledge — is morally the most perfect Christian. The knowledge he has attained makes for pure and holy living. In spite of the disrepute attaching to the term Clement called his ideal Christian a gnostic — one who knows — and the *Stromateis* is devoted in considerable part, particularly the seventh book, to a description of the moral and religious character of the gnostic, showing in what it consists and emphasizing its value as well as its beauty.

The ideal of the true gnostic was likeness to God.⁴ Upon this Clement laid great stress, referring frequently to the imitation of God as the supreme aim of the Christian. At times when thinking of the transcendence of God and his essential unlikeness to all else, Clement put the imitation of Christ or the Logos in place of the imitation of God.⁵ In either case, however, it was the divine to which the ideal Christian must strive to conform. Likeness to God Clement

¹ *Ibid.* I. III, 22.

² Cf. *ibid.* IV. XXI.

³ *Ibid.* II. XIX, 97.

⁴ *Ibid.* I. VII, 37.

⁵ E.g. *ibid.* VII. III, 13.

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carried so far as to speak now and then of the deification of the gnostic.¹ The language reminds us of Irenæus and some of the other Fathers, but Clement did not mean that the Christian becomes divine in essence or substance (as Irenæus did) but in character. In other words in speaking of his deification he was only expressing in a stronger way the gnostic's moral likeness to God which will ultimately be complete. There is no mysticism in Clement and the Irenæan conception of deification was entirely foreign to him.

The likeness to God of which Clement spoke involved first of all the negative virtue of self-restraint (*σωφροσύνη*). To be sure strictly speaking God is not capable of self-restraint, for having all things and being subject to no changes of fortune he has no passions over which to exercise control.² But with men the control of the passions is the foundation of all virtue. Self-restraint indeed is God's greatest gift to the human race.³

But the gnostic will not be satisfied with restraining his passions, he will strive to eliminate them altogether as Job did, who was a true gnostic,⁴ and as Jesus and his Apostles did.⁵ Passionlessness (*ἀπάθεια*) is the ideal. To live superior to the ordinary interests and vicissitudes of life, entirely free from the desires and ambitions that sway the mass of men, this to be most like God who is impassible.⁶ The ideal is similar to that of the Stoics and was without doubt taken from them. Whatever might be true of their metaphysic

¹ *E.g. Strom.* IV. xxiii, 149; VI. xiv, 113; cf. also VII. v, 29; xiii, 82, where he speaks of God in the Gnostic.

² *Ibid.* II. xviii, 81.

³ *Ibid.* II. xx, 126.

⁴ *Ibid.* VII. xii, 80.

⁵ *Ibid.* VI. ix, 71, where Clement says that Christ was entirely impassible and inaccessible to any movement of feeling either of pleasure or pain. (Cf. VII. ii, 7; xii, 72).

⁶ *Ibid.* IV. xxiii.

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the ethic of the Stoics was immensely influential in Clement's day and dominated his thinking on ethical matters, as it did that of many another.

At times Clement went so far as to deny desire of any kind to his ideal Christian. The perfect man, he says, is above all affections : courage, fear, cheerfulness, anger, envy, love for the creature.¹ But at other times he was less rigorous in his language and represented the gnostic's apathy as freedom from the desires of the flesh and from the lust after earthly goods and pleasures. The difficulty was that in theory he drew the distinction not between good desires and bad desires but between desire and the freedom from desire in general as if the entire life of the emotions were unworthy. Such a theory of course left no room for religious aspiration and devotion or for human sympathy and brotherly love and was therefore peculiarly alien to the Christian ideal and was bound to lead to serious inconsistencies.

Clement's emphasis on self-control and on freedom from desire looked in the direction of asceticism, but as a matter of fact he was much less ascetic than many other Christians of the day. Asceticism, often of an extreme type, was common in his time not only among the sectaries but also within the main body of the church. The dualistic notion of the essential evil of matter was widespread, as has been already seen, and its natural consequence was asceticism. But Clement did not share this dualism and for all his insistence on self-restraint and superiority to worldly desires he was far from being an ascetic. If the gnostic is not to seek the necessities of life it is not because they are evil but because he knows God will supply them.² Earthly goods are for our use but do not belong to us, for we pass on and they go to others.³ Not asceticism but moderation is the ethical keynote of the Stromateis as well as of the Pædagogus.

¹ *Ibid.* VI. ix.

² *Ibid.* VII. vii, 46.

³ *Ibid.* IV. xiii, 94.

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To be sure Clement recommended that the gnostic avoid eating meat which is apt to make the mind sluggish, but abstinence is only for the sake of discipline.¹ Wine is bad, he says, for the young, but it is all right for their elders if not taken to excess.² Rejecting the position of certain sectaries of ascetic views he declares that the body is not to be despised and he opposes celibacy, insisting that it is better to marry and rise superior to the cares and temptations that beset the married life than to be without the experiences that marriage brings. The celibate is less tried than the married man and is therefore inferior to him. It is our duty to provide the most varied training we can for the soul.³

Clement's striking little tract on What Rich Man Can be Saved? makes his position abundantly clear. According to this tract it is not the possession of wealth that is bad but the wrong estimate and use of it.⁴ Jesus did not really want the rich young man to get rid of his wealth but to change his attitude toward it. Many things commendably Christian can be done only if one has property to share with others. Not to throw it away but to use it as an instrument of good should be our aim. Outward things are not harmful and salvation does not depend on the want of them — a rich man may be good and a poor man bad. It is our attitude that is important — freedom from desire for things, not from the things themselves. It is our passions we are to sell not our goods. Rich and poor alike are saved by love for God and neighbor.

All this was entirely in accord with Clement's general position. The church he regarded not as a mere isolated sect completely cut off from the world outside, as many wished

¹ *E.g. Strom.* VII. vi, 33. In the previous paragraph Clement says that animal sacrifices were invented to justify the eating of flesh.

² *Pædagogus* II. ii, 22.

³ *Strom.* IV. xxvi; VII. xii, 70, 71.

⁴ Suffering and poverty are bad he says in *Strom.* IV. v, 22.

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it to be, but as an institution serving the world and sharing its life. It was a divine institution to be sure having its origin from above and its aim the salvation of men and their training for the world to come, but it was to live in the world not apart from it, to transform men's faiths and lives in the midst of society not to remove them from society altogether.

The likeness to God after which the true gnostic will strive includes not simply self-restraint and growing freedom from desire but also love, for God is a God of love. Good is not negative but positive, Clement says, and there is a double reward: first for not doing evil and then for doing good.¹ His emphasis on love was genuinely Christian and while perhaps he had less to say about it than about freedom from passion he referred to it repeatedly, sometimes in striking terms, as for instance "Love is a beauty of man."²

Love for God he put first. The gnostic is above all a lover of God.³ Higher love is due to God who created the soul than to man who begat the body.⁴ True worship involves love for God and such love brings wisdom and freedom from the passions.⁵ Martyrdom is an expression of love for God, or for the Lord. But martyrdom is not to be sought; the man who seeks it is guilty.⁶ It was in accordance with this principle that Clement left Alexandria in 202 when a persecution broke out under Septimius Severus.

Love for God expresses itself in honour shown to him, in obedience, in prayer or communion with him, and in the effort to know him better and better. Of prayer Clement has a great deal to say. Some of the most beautiful passages in his writings, indeed in the whole range of early Christian literature, have to do with prayer. Prayer may take the

¹ *Strom.* VI. XII, 103; VII. XII, 74.

² *Pædagogus* III. I, 3.

³ *Strom.* VII. I, 4.

⁴ *Ibid.* VII. XII, 79.

⁵ *Ibid.* VI. IX.

⁶ *Ibid.* IV. X.

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form of petition or of thanksgiving, but whatever its form it is in essence communion with God.¹ It is not confined to set times and places and is not dependent on the use of words, but with the true gnostic is constant and lifelong. Wherever he is he communes with God. "Living our whole life as a festival, persuaded that God is everywhere present, we praise while we farm, we hymn while we sail, in the rest of our life we conduct ourselves carefully. The gnostic dwells close to God, being at the same time grave and cheerful in all things, grave because his mind is set on the divine, cheerful because he reflects upon the human benefits which God has bestowed upon us."² "Prayer, then, to speak more boldly, is conversation with God. And if we whisper and without opening the lips speak in silence, we cry inwardly. For God hears unceasingly all the utterances of the heart."³ "If some assign fixed hours to prayer, as for instance the third and sixth and ninth, the gnostic prays his whole life long, striving by prayer to have fellowship with God."⁴ "The gnostic is so exceedingly holy that he is ready rather to pray and fail than to succeed without prayer."⁵

Love for God expresses itself also in the effort to know him more and more fully. The knowledge of God is an end in itself not a mere means to a farther end. Man was created that he might attain the knowledge of God and the true gnostic is the one that knows him. Higher than all else it is to contemplate God eternally.⁶ Knowledge brings salvation and is inseparable from it, but if the true gnostic had to choose between the two he would choose the knowledge of God rather than salvation.⁷

¹ In *Strom.* VII. vii, 39 Clement calls prayer converse with God, and in *Protrepticus* X (80 P) says it is man's nature to be in fellowship with God.

² *Strom.* VII. vii, 35.

⁵ *Ibid.* XII, 73.

³ *Ibid.* 39.

⁶ *Ibid.* II. xi, 52; VII. vii, 46.

⁴ *Ibid.* 40.

⁷ *Ibid.* IV. xxii, 136.

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Love is the supreme motive in all well doing. The ordinary Christian is moved by the fear of punishment and the hope of reward. But the gnostic is moved solely by love — love for God or for the good — and in his love he goes beyond the righteousness of the law.¹ At this point Clement was at one with Paul, though he put the gnostic in place of the mere believer. The life of the former as he conceived it was identical with the life of the Christian as depicted by the Apostle in being a life of freedom from the law. The goodness of the gnostic is not legal goodness; it is the spontaneous expression of love for God. The ordinary Christian is subject to law and his life is bound about by rules to keep him from falling into sin; but the gnostic needs no such restraint. His love for God inevitably bears fruit in God-like living.

On love for God is based love for one's fellow-men, the creatures of God.² Love for men expresses itself in friendship and hospitality, in pity for the poor and the suffering and in the effort to help them in every way possible.³ The true gnostic will not confine his love to the Christian brotherhood, but will show beneficence to all. He will be quick to forgive injuries and will love his enemies, not for their sins but because they are the work of God.⁴ He will even carry his humaneness into his dealings with the brute creation.⁵ A very important part of his beneficence consists in the effort to share with others the blessings he enjoys, not simply the goods of this world but particularly salvation and the knowledge of divine things. He will endeavor always to make others imitators of God and to put them in

¹ *Ibid.* VII. xi, 67. In VII. x, 57 Clement speaks of the progress from heathenism to faith, from faith to knowledge, from knowledge to love.

² *Ibid.* II. xviii.

³ *Ibid.* II. ix, xviii; VII. xii, 77.

⁴ *Ibid.* IV. xiv; VII. xii, 74; xiv, 85.

⁵ *Ibid.* II. xviii, 92. In this passage Clement asserts that Pythagoras drew his principle of kindness to animals from the Old Testament.

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possession of the truth.¹ Summing it all up, the character of the gnostic is marked not by knowledge alone as the name seems to imply, but also by freedom from desire, by love for God and man, and by the effort to help and instruct one's fellows in every way possible.

It is a striking and beautiful picture of the ideal Christian that Clement draws in his *Stromateis*. There are few things in early Christian literature to compare with it. And however extreme it may seem at certain points it was in line with the best ethical thought of Clement's day and was calculated to overcome the prejudice which he was combating as nothing else could have done. As an ethical teacher he had no peers among the eastern Fathers so far as they are known to us. It is a great pity that those who came after him were so absorbed in theological questions that they paid relatively little attention to ethics and Clement's moral insight went for naught.² He was much greater in ethics than in theology, but it was his theology alone that was remembered.

Another point made by Clement in his effort to disarm prejudice and commend the gnostic to the confidence of other Christians was that the true gnostic is loyal to the church. "Only that one is really pious and devout who is genuinely in accord with the rule of the church."³ "The life of the gnostic it seems to me is nothing else than deeds and words agreeable to the tradition of the Lord."⁴ Thus the true gnostic was distinguished from those commonly so called who taught false doctrine out of line with the beliefs of the church. It was these latter that had made all the trouble

¹ *Strom.* II. x; VII. III, 19; IX, 52.

² It is true that moral (especially ascetic) tracts were written and practical sermons preached in every generation, but ethics as a subject of study and of ordered and systematic thought was completely overshadowed by theology.

³ *Ibid.* VII. VII, 41.

⁴ *Ibid.* VII. XVI, 104.

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and had aroused among the Christians widespread suspicion and fear of all learning and philosophy. But the person whom Clement was defending was of a different character altogether. He merited the confidence and esteem of all Christians and by him alone was the highest ideal realized.

In this connection it may be noticed that then, as so often in modern times, the charge was brought by outsiders that the multiplicity of Christian sects shows Christianity itself to be unworthy of credence. Replying to the charge Clement says: "Both among you Jews and among the most approved of the Greek philosophers there have been a great many sects and yet you do not say that one should hesitate to be a philosopher or a follower of the Jews because of these divisions. In the next place it was prophesied by the Lord (and it is impossible that what has been foretold should not come to pass), that heresies would be sown among the truth like tares among the wheat, the cause of this being that every beautiful thing is followed by its caricature. What then? If anyone breaks his covenants and disregards his agreement with us, shall we also abandon what is true on account of him who has violated his word? No, as the good man must always keep faith and not fail in anything he has promised even if others break their engagements it is fitting that we should in no way transgress the rule of the church. And especially do we confess and maintain the things that are most important while they neglect them. Those then are to be believed who firmly hold the truth. And now using this defense in the large it is permitted us to say that physicians also engage equally in the practice of healing though holding different opinions in accordance with their particular sects. Does anyone then who is suffering in body and is in need of medical attendance decline to send for a physician because of the diversity in schools of medicine? So neither should he who is diseased in soul and

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full of idols use the heresies as a pretext when he needs to recover health and turn to God." ¹

In this passage and elsewhere Clement speaks of the "rule of the church," ² but he nowhere quotes from a creed or symbol as Irenæus and Tertullian do. Possibly in his *Didascalos* he might have done so as Origen did in his *De principiis*. At any rate it is evident that to him as to the others there were certain truths which belonged to the tradition of the church and the denial of which distinguished the false gnostic from the true. And it is evident also that within the "ancient and catholic church" as he called it, ³ of which he was himself an honoured member and teacher, there was room, so he believed, for the higher Christian knowledge that seemed to him so precious and important. He insisted on the distinction between this gnosis and the gnosis of the heretical sects against which he was as ready to do battle as anyone else. ⁴ To be sure so far as we are aware he wrote no anti-heretical work as Irenæus, Tertullian, Hippolytus and others did, but he has not a little to say about heretics and their false teachings particularly in the latter part of the seventh book of his *Stromateis*. Marcion and Basilides are frequently mentioned and their erroneous opinions exposed and denounced. ⁵ The determinism of Basilides and Marcion's separation of the God of the Christians from the God of the Jews were especially distasteful to him. He did not express himself as bitterly about heretics as many others did. They excited pity, he says, more than hate; ⁶ and he labored rather to correct

¹ *Strom.* VII. xv, 89-90. ² *κανὼν ἐκκλησιαστικὸς*. ³ *Strom.* VII. xvii, 107.

⁴ See his sharp words against heretics in *Strom.* I. xix, 99. In VII. xvi, 100 he says "Of the three different mental states, ignorance, conceit, knowledge, ignorance belongs to the heathen, knowledge to the true church, conceit to the heretics."

⁵ He refers not only to Marcion and Basilides but also to Simon, Marcus, Isidore, Valentinus and many others.

⁶ *Strom.* VII. xvi, 103.

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and convert than to condemn and exclude them. At the same time he thought of them as outsiders not as Christian brethren and fellow-members of the community of faith, and hence his breadth and tolerance were not unlimited.

In connection with Clement's insistence upon the importance of a knowledge of the deeper truths of Christianity a few words should be said about his use of allegory and his defense of it. The practice was much older than he. The Stoics, among others, had employed it on a large scale in interpreting ancient Greek literature, and in Alexandria Philo had applied it to the Jewish Scriptures. Clement followed the latter in his treatment of the Old Testament and carried the same method over to the New where, as Philo had not preceded him, his exegesis was more independent. Philo had used allegory chiefly to rid the Scriptures of offensive matters and to get Biblical authority for his own teachings. Clement employed it principally for another purpose: to discover hidden truths for the instruction and delectation of the gnostic — truths inaccessible to the rank and file — and thus to support his contention that there is a higher stage of knowledge to which Christians should aspire. It was therefore natural that he should defend the practice in his *Stromateis* and should illustrate it in detail as he did particularly in the sixth book. The extensive use made of it, for instance, in the sixteenth chapter which contains an allegorical interpretation of the decalogue, was not to give his readers an understanding of the Scriptures (the *Stromateis* is not a Biblical commentary), nor to confirm his own ethical and theological opinions. Rather it was to show that the distinction between the two grades of Christians, simple believers and gnostics, was not of his own making but was rooted in the providence of God and had the sanction of Christ and his Apostles. The ordinary Christian might

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be satisfied with the literal meaning of Scripture but the gnostic could not rest content therewith. He must penetrate beneath the surface to the deeper meaning concealed from the eye of the inexpert.

After referring in the first book of the *Stromateis* to the distinction between the mature and the immature drawn in the Epistle to the Hebrews Clement continues: "It is necessary therefore to conceal the wisdom spoken in a mystery which the Son of God taught. Isaiah the Prophet had his tongue purified by fire that he might be able to tell the vision; and it is fitting that we should cleanse not only our tongue but also our ears if we would participate in the truth. This stood in the way of my writing and even now I hesitate, as it is said, to cast pearls before swine lest they trample them under foot and turn and rend me. For it is difficult to explain the genuinely pure and transparent words concerning the true light to the swinish and immature among one's readers. Scarcely indeed could anything heard seem more absurd than these to the multitude or more wonderful and inspiring to those highly endowed."¹

In his use of allegory Clement set the fashion for his pupil Origen and many other theologians who found in it as Philo had done a means of freeing the Scriptures from blemishes and securing divine confirmation for their own doctrines. Clement had a high regard for the Scriptures, but he was not troubled by the scruples that beset later theologians and was not seeking support for his views. Had he written the *Didascalos* he might have used the Bible for this purpose as others did, but it is hardly probable, for he was never much concerned with the source from which truth came. It was its content rather than its provenance that interested him. In his hands therefore allegory was a more innocent thing than in the hands of many another.

¹ *Strom.* I. xii, 55. Cf. *ibid.* V. ix and x.

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I have said that Clement wrote the *Stromateis* primarily to dissipate the current prejudice against philosophy and theology. This he did by pointing out the place of philosophy in the divine economy, and its importance if one were to attain the knowledge of truth to which all Christians should aspire, as also by showing the character of the true gnostic. But the work contains much more than this. Partly of set purpose, partly because he stumbled upon them in the course of the discussion, Clement dealt with other topics sometimes briefly and by the way, sometimes at considerable length. Thus he had much to say, in more than one connection, about the nature and character of man.

His estimate of human nature was high. Man was made in the divine image by the Logos and is himself in possession of logos or reason.¹ The image of God Clement found in man's rational nature. Because he is a rational being man is like God.² As a rational being he is also free, for freedom and rationality go together. Controllingly interested as he was in ethics Clement laid the greatest emphasis on the freedom of the will. Man would be subject neither to praise nor blame were he not free and were his beliefs and his conduct not always completely within his own power. In agreement with Justin Martyr Clement maintained that the devil too is endowed with free will as men are.³ Freedom indeed meant so much to him and was counted by him so essential to moral character that he insisted that the goodness of God is voluntary — a matter of will not of nature. God might be other than good if he chose.⁴

In at least one passage Clement refers to the fall of Adam and the bondage into which it brought him.⁵ But there is no indication that this destroyed the liberty of his descend-

¹ *Protrept.* I (7 P).

² *Strom.* II. XIX, 102. In one passage (II. xvii) he speaks of man as like God because he is immortal, but this was exceptional.

³ *Ibid.* I. xvii, 83.

⁴ *Ibid.* VII. vii, 42.

⁵ *Protrept.* XI (86 P).

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ants. They have not lost the divine image and are still rational and free. The doctrine of original sin played no part in Clement's thinking. It was in free will not inherited bondage or corruption of nature that he was interested.

Because he is free and at the same time weak and ignorant man falls into sin.¹ He therefore needs enlightenment and this is given by the Logos who thus becomes the Saviour.² Of the enlightenment given by the Logos Clement had a great deal to say. In fact it was one of his favorite themes in the *Protrepticus* and *Pædagogus* as well as in the *Stromateis*. The Logos instructs men in the way of righteousness and so saves them. He also invites, exhorts, warns, threatens and promises, thus persuading men to forsake sin and seek salvation.³ He has always been instructing them. The illumination that comes from him is not a monopoly of Christians though it is to be found among them more largely than elsewhere.⁴

Being due to the enlightenment brought by the Logos salvation is a divine gift not a human achievement. God's greatest work is to save men. And yet though salvation is a gift of God no one is saved unless he does his part. His part indeed is so important that Clement in at least one passage speaks of men as the authors of their own salvation.⁵ Even faith, the first step, is within man's power. It is voluntary not involuntary and he may believe or disbelieve as he pleases.

In agreement with Paul Clement frequently asserts that salvation is of faith.⁶ His notion of faith, however, was very different from the Apostle's. He did not think of it as

¹ *Strom.* I. xvii; II. xv; VII. i, 3 and often.

² In *Protrept.* I (7 P) Clement says that the Logos is the cause both of our being and of our well being, i.e., he is both creator and saviour.

³ *Protrept.* I (8 P); *Pædagogus* I. xii; *Strom.* VII. ii, 6.

⁴ *Protrept.* I (7 P); *Pædagogus* I. vii; *Strom.* VI. vii and xiii.

⁵ *Strom.* VII. xv, 122.

⁶ E.g. *Strom.* V. i.

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a mystical bond of union with Christ but as a conviction that certain things are true, a conviction that becomes a motive to righteous living. "For if a person do not believe that that to which he was addicted is sin he will not repent; and if he do not believe that punishment is impending over the transgressor, and that salvation is for the one who lives according to the commandments, he will not reform." ¹

Faith therefore must be followed by repentance and repentance by righteousness and obedience, that is, by conduct befitting a disciple of Christ, if one is to be saved. Sometimes Clement sums up the needed conditions of salvation under the single word piety (*θεοσεβεία*) which he defines as "conduct in agreement and in conformity with God." ² Frequently he speaks of knowledge as bringing salvation, meaning practically the same as when he speaks of salvation as due to faith. A man knows the difference between right and wrong; he knows what he must do to be saved; and he knows what the consequences will be if he fails to do it. ³

Speaking generally faith seems to have meant to Clement on the one hand the conviction that certain things are true — a conviction that leads a man to seek salvation and to live righteously — on the other hand an attitude of trust in God and of receptivity toward divine truth which opens the way not only to right living but also to an apprehension of realities hidden from the eyes of the callous and narrow-minded. Nothing annoyed Clement more than spiritual obtuseness and particularly the closed mind which made a man impervious to all new truth and prevented growth in the knowledge of higher things. No one could possibly attain the status of a genuine gnostic without faith in the

¹ *Strom.* II. VI, 27. Cf. VI. XIV, 108. This, as we have seen, was the common notion of faith shared by Apostolic Fathers, Apologists, and others.

² *Ibid.* II. IX, 45.

³ *Ibid.* VI. XV, 115; VII. III, 18.

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second sense referred to above, that is without an eye for spiritual realities and a mind hospitable to all truth of whatever sort.

Although salvation depends on a man's own efforts he is not left without assistance. The divine forgiveness which follows upon his faith and repentance is itself a remedy and divine help is always to be had.¹ This, however, meant ordinarily only the help due to instruction or enlightenment, and even if more was involved, Clement made very little of it compared with Irenæus. Baptismal grace endowing fallen men with a new divine nature, which is then nourished and sustained by their participation in the eucharist, had no place in his thought. His thinking moved rather in the moral than the physical realm. Salvation though a gift of God is earned by man who is free to believe and to live as he will. If he makes the right choice and lives as he should he will be saved, otherwise not. There are degrees of salvation depending on the way Christians conduct themselves in this life. Heaven contains many mansions fitted to the varying worth of the saved.²

Salvation involves eternal life and this Clement represents, in agreement with the Fourth Gospel, as the knowledge of God.³ Often he uses the phrase "eternal life" as if it were simply another expression for immortality, implying that only the saved will live forever.⁴ But sometimes he speaks of all men whether good or bad as immortal.⁵ The good will inherit unending blessedness, the bad unending misery, or everlasting punishment. At this point Clement was simply reproducing the common Christian tradition which was out

¹ *Strom.* II. xv; *Protrept.* X (82 P); XII (94 P).

² *Ibid.* VI. xiv, 114.

³ *Protrept.* X (76 P).

⁴ *Protrept.* X (77 P); *Strom.* VI. xv, 121; VII. III, 20. In one place he speaks of the flesh as redeemed and endowed with immortality (*Pædagogus* III. 1, 2), but this is exceptional. As a rule he represents salvation as for the spirit only.

⁵ Cf. e.g. *Strom.* V. xiv, 91.

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of line with his own way of looking at things, for he insists in many passages that all punishment is remedial and that God never takes vengeance on anyone.

Eternal life is not confined to Christians or to those who have lived since Christ. Under the law and even before the giving of the law men were saved by faith and righteousness — a doctrine in harmony with the belief that the Logos had been revealing God and the way of life in all ages and to all peoples. But this suggests the question, with which Justin Martyr had already wrestled, Why did the Logos become incarnate? Clement nowhere answers the question explicitly. He accepts the gospel story in its entirety — the birth from a virgin, the wonderful works of Jesus, his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension. Occasionally too his language seems to imply that a special worth attached to the birth and the death; but the language is purely traditional and it is quite clear that he was really interested in Christ only as the Logos, or as an instructor. The Logos took on flesh and appeared in Jesus Christ that he might teach men more clearly and persuasively and by his example might influence them to choose the way of life instead of death.¹ Christ's incarnation and work therefore had no such value to Clement as to Irenæus. It was the eternal Logos he chiefly thought of; the incarnation was only an incident. On earth the Logos simply continued the work he had always been doing, the work of a teacher or revealer.

Clement's writings, as has been seen, are principally ethical and practical, but there is also not a little theology scattered through them. From isolated passages, particularly in the *Stromateis*, we can gather some idea at least of his thought about God. God is the creator and father of the universe. He is the first cause of all that is and the sus-

¹ *Protrep.* I (7 P, 8 P); *Strom.* VII. II, 8.

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taining power that holds the universe together. Creation did not take place in time but with time. "How could creation take place in time seeing time also was born along with things that exist?"¹

Clement made a great deal of the power of God as evidenced in the creation of the world, but he made even more of his moral character. God is without passion, as the gnostic also should be. But still more God is beneficent. Of his goodness, kindness and love indeed Clement had most to say and was never tired of emphasizing this side of his character.² God is the providential ruler of the world and governs it for the good of all.³ The world was created for the sake of man, especially for the sake of good men and their salvation.⁴ God's providential care extends to everything. Evil never comes from him nor suffering though he sometimes permits them for the sake of a larger good.⁵ God is not only kind and gracious, he is also just and righteous. The combination of mercy and righteousness in God Clement insisted upon particularly in opposition to Marcion who separated the just God of the Jews from the loving God of the Christians.⁶ But even in his righteousness God is good. He never takes vengeance upon men, as many of the Fathers maintained; he only chastises them. Punishment is always for the sake of education and is disciplinary not vindictive.⁷

¹ *Strom.* VI. xvi, 142. Clement was not concerned here with the nature of time but with the antiquity of creation. It is worth remarking, however, that his question reveals the influence of Greek philosophy, which appears continually in his writings, for there underlay it Plato's theory voiced in the *Timæus*, that time is a concomitant of motion and change and that there is no time where there is no change. God being changeless is also timeless and exists in an eternal now. Only with creation did change and therefore time begin.

² Cf. e.g. *Strom.* I. xviii, 90; II. xix.

³ *Strom.* VII. ii, 12.

⁴ *Ibid.* VII. vii, 48.

⁵ *Ibid.* IV. xii.

⁶ Cf. *Pædagogus* I. viii; *Strom.* I. xxvii; II. xviii, 86.

⁷ *Pædagogus* I. viii; *Strom.* IV. xxiv; VII. iii, 16; xvi, 102.

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Clement, however, was a philosopher as well as a devout Christian and here and there in his *Stromateis* he speaks about God in purely philosophical terms. Following Philo and the later Platonists he emphasized the transcendence of God and carried it to extreme lengths. God he identified with the philosophical absolute. He is unapproachable, inaccessible, unknowable, incommunicable, beyond space and time, and out of relation with all else that is. He is pure being and an idea of him can be reached only by a process of abstraction. "The sacrifice acceptable to God is unchanging abstraction from the body and its passions. This is the really true piety; and therefore was not philosophy rightly called by Socrates the practice of death? For he who does not employ sight in thinking, nor drag in any of the other senses, but with the pure mind itself reaches the objects, he follows the true philosophy. This is what Pythagoras wished with the five years of silence which he recommended to his disciples, that turning away from the senses they should look upon the deity with the mind alone."¹ "We may then apprehend the way of purification by confession and that of contemplation by analysis, going forward to the first notion, beginning by analysis with the things that underlie it, removing from the body its physical qualities, depriving it of the dimension of depth, then of breadth, and then of length. For the point that is left is a monad, so to speak, having position, from which if we subtract position we have a monad in thought. If therefore taking away all that pertains to bodies and to the things called incorporeal, we cast ourselves into the immensity of Christ and thence by purity go on into the void, we may come somehow or other to the understanding of the Almighty, knowing not what he is but what he is not. Form or motion or standing or a throne or place or right or left is not at all to

¹ *Strom.* V. xi, 67.

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be attributed to the Father of all even though it be so written. But what each of these means will be shown in the proper place. The first cause therefore is not in space, but above space and time and name and understanding.”¹

In accordance with this idea of God Clement rejected the Stoic doctrine of divine immanence — the doctrine of “those of the Porch who say that the divine permeates all matter even in its most dishonorable forms, thus really bringing shame on philosophy.”² Similarly he opposed anthropomorphism of every kind. God’s nature and ours are different and to represent God as like men in any respect is wholly to misrepresent him.³

Clement’s two diverse conceptions of God, one religious the other philosophical, seem at first blush quite inconsistent with each other. But they were reconciled or at any rate their inconsistency was made less glaring by the doctrine of the Logos. In the Logos the abstract becomes concrete, the absolute enters into relations, and God creates the world and reveals himself to men. God in himself is so transcendent that neither creation nor revelation is possible to him nor can men attain to a knowledge of him. But through the Logos and the Logos alone God creates all things that exist and through the Logos he makes himself known to men and is known by them.⁴ It is the Logos moreover that governs the world and cares for the individual, the community and the universe.⁵

Clement’s idea of the Logos was made up, like Philo’s, of Platonic and Stoic elements. It was a combination of the supreme idea or archetype of Plato and the seminal principles or resident forces of the Stoics which constitute all life.

¹ *Strom.* V. xi, 71.

² *Protrept.* V (58 P).

³ *Strom.* II. xvi; VII. iv, 28.

⁴ *Ibid.* IV. xxv; V. iii; VII. x, 58.

⁵ *Ibid.* VII. ii, 6.

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Hence the Logos is both above and in the world of men and things. He is at once transcendent and immanent. The Logos is divine; he is God himself, not a secondary or subordinate divinity. Clement refers to him as *θεός* and *ὁ θεός*,¹ and while he speaks of him in the tenth chapter of the *Protrepticus* as the image of God, he also calls him in the same chapter "the truly most manifest God." But although the Logos is God he is not the absolute; rather he is God in relations. Through the Logos God creates and governs and reveals. In himself he is far away and inaccessible, but in the Logos he is near and pervades all being.²

Clearness as to the exact status of the Logos and his precise relationship to God Clement did not reach. In fact his thought on the subject was even vaguer and more confused than Philo's and he left the question as a problem for his successors. But through him the philosophical absolute entered Christian theology and has remained to plague theologians from that day to this. A God who is at once the absolute, out of all relations, beyond space and time, unapproachable, incommunicable, unknowable, and at the same time a personal father, the creator and providential ruler of the universe and a loving and gracious being who cares for men and saves them — it is no wonder that Clement found difficulty in combining these two. As I have said he effected the combination by means of the Logos, a philosophical conception which measurably served his needs. God in himself is altogether apart from and out of all relation with the world; in the Logos he enters space and time, creates, governs and reveals himself to men. Thus he is at once transcendent and immanent — the absolute of philosophy and yet the personal God of traditional religion.

¹ *Protrept.* I (7 P); IX (70 P).

² *Strom.* V. xiv, 89. An earlier chap. (*Strom.* II. II) in which the Logos is not explicitly mentioned should be read in the light of this passage.

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But unfortunately Clement wrought permanent and irremediable confusion by distinguishing God the Father revealed in the Old Testament from the Son of God incarnate in Christ and by identifying the Logos with the latter instead of the former. This was made necessary by Christian tradition, but it left the contradiction between God the absolute on the one hand and God the creator and ruler of the world and the Father of Jews and Christians on the other hand quite unresolved. If he had identified Christ with God the Father (as the Modalists did) the difficulty would have been removed. As it was, the contradiction between God the absolute and God the Father of the world and of men remained and has played havoc with Christian theism ever since.¹

Clement was in many respects a charming figure. In spite of his prejudice against heathenism and heresy which appears in many connections he was uncommonly broad-minded, far more so indeed than most early Christians. He had a high though discriminating regard for Greek philosophy and he welcomed truth from whatever source it came. He believed that Christianity was for the intellectual classes as well as for the common people and he was convinced that it must deal with many questions besides the way of salvation and must offer a solution of many problems that were troubling the minds of thinking men. He therefore recognized the importance of theology and did his best to overcome the common prejudice against it and to secure recognition for it as essential to the ideal Christian.

He produced no theological system of his own ; not because he was incapable of it — his masterly exposition of the character of the true Gnostic shows his power of sustained and orderly thinking — and not because it did not fall within his plan, for he intended to write the *Didascalos* in

¹ See my *God of the Early Christians*, p. 144.

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which probably his theology would have found an adequate embodiment. As it was he failed to do it and it remained for his pupil Origen to accomplish what he did not live to achieve. His work was thus for the most part only preliminary and introductory. He cleared the way for Origen and later theologians. He left problems for others to solve ; he solved few of them himself. From the theological point of view he is chiefly notable for two things : for his defense of theology and of the marriage of Christianity with Greek philosophy, and for his combination of the philosophical absolute with the God of the Christians. Thenceforth it was generally recognized at any rate in the east that philosophy and religion belong together and that Greek philosophy and Christian theology should go hand in hand ; and thenceforth it was believed both in east and west that, unlike as they are, the God of philosophy and the God of religion are one.

CHAPTER XI

ORIGEN

ORIGEN was born probably in Alexandria in the latter part of the second century. Unlike Clement and Justin Martyr and many another early theologian he came of a Christian family and was brought up within the church. His father, Leonides, was a teacher by profession and Origen was given an excellent education. He became a pupil of Clement's in the catechetical school and after the latter left Alexandria he succeeded to his place. Though an exceedingly precocious youth Eusebius' statement that he was at the head of the school already in his eighteenth year¹ is something of a strain on our credulity. Whatever truth there may be in this and other reports of his early attainments, at any rate he became in course of time the greatest theologian and the most daring speculative genius of the eastern church. He owed much to Clement but he was a greater thinker than his teacher and founded a school of thought which lasted for centuries. Philosopher as well as theologian, his interests were wide and varied. Within the church tendencies of the most diverse sort owed their inception to him. He was at the same time a notable scholar, learned not only in the Scriptures and in the history and literature of Christianity but also in Greek philosophy. Many of his ideas in fact came from the philosophers.

He was a great teacher as well as scholar. In the panegyric of Gregory Thaumaturgus, a loyal and devoted pupil

¹ Eusebius, *H. E.* VI. 2:3.

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who studied under him for some years in Cæsarea, where Origen made his home during the latter part of his life, we have an interesting account of his pedagogical methods. His teaching was designed to promote virtue and piety as well as learning. He insisted on laying a broad foundation and he himself taught many of the subjects included in a liberal education, not only logic but also mathematics and natural science. Geometry and astronomy he made much of as a means of weaning the mind from the objects of sense and preparing it for higher things. Other sciences he used to enlarge the outlook and to cultivate a rational in place of an irrational appreciation of the divine government of the universe. On philosophy he laid the greatest stress, declaring that it was not possible for anyone to be truly pious who did not philosophize. He insisted on the widest possible acquaintance with the Greek philosophers, the atheists alone excepted. That his students might not be carried away by any one system of thought he wished them to have an intimate acquaintance with many systems. All this preliminary work led up to the study of religion and particularly of the Christian Scriptures, the crown of the whole.

Origen was not only a scholar and teacher, he was also a prolific writer. With the aid of a corps of secretaries and stenographers, provided by a wealthy friend, he was able to do an enormous amount of literary work. According to Jerome he was the author of six thousand books! Discount the number as we may he was at any rate one of the most voluminous authors of the ancient world. He did extensive pioneer work in the field of textual criticism, both Old Testament and New; he wrote a large number of Biblical commentaries; and he published the first systematic work on Christian theology. His interests were practical as well as speculative. He wrote a beautiful tract on prayer, one

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of the finest bits of early Christian literature, and another on martyrdom, and his work against Celsus, in reply to an attack on Christianity by a Platonist of that name, was the most elaborate and effective apology for Christianity produced in the first three centuries.

Like Clement he took truth wherever he found it, but he was more bound by tradition than his teacher and made more than he of the authority of the Catholic church. The development of ecclesiasticism seems to have been slower in Alexandria than in other parts of Christendom — the temper of the place was hardly favorable to it — but Catholic exclusiveness was beginning to make itself felt even there, and it is not an accident that Origen the pupil was less tolerant than Clement the teacher. Eusebius records an interesting incident of the former's youth which reveals a narrower spirit than Clement's. It seems that after his father's death as a martyr he made his home for a time with a woman of wealth who had as a protégé an alleged heretic from Antioch. But although Origen, Eusebius says, was under the necessity of associating with him he "could never be induced to join with him in prayer; for he held even as a boy the rule of the church and abominated, as he somewhere expresses it, heretical teachings."¹ It was in line with this that in his commentary on Matthew he declared it was "better to pray with no one than to pray with the wicked."² In spite of his disapproval of heretics Clement would hardly have gone as far as this.

In agreement with Clement Origen drew a sharp distinction between *pistis* and *gnosis*, or faith and knowledge, but he interpreted faith in a different way. Whereas Clement at times at any rate identified it with the receptive spirit, or an attitude of open mindedness toward truth, Origen made it the accept-

¹ Eusebius, *H. E.* VI. 2.

² Quoted from Redepenning's *Origenes*, vol. I, p. 189.

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ance of a definite set of facts and doctrines. Adumbrations of the latter view, to be sure, appear in Clement, as, for instance, when he says that faith is a compendious knowledge of the essentials of Christianity while gnosis is the demonstration of them, and when he insists as he does repeatedly that fundamental truths can be believed only, not demonstrated.¹ But Origen went further and drew the lines more narrowly within which speculation might legitimately move. At the beginning of his *De principiis* he says, "Since there are many who suppose that they agree with Christianity, while some of them think differently from their predecessors, and since the teaching of the church handed down in orderly succession from the apostles remains in the churches even until now, that alone is to be believed as true which is in no way out of harmony with ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition."²

While Origen's notion of faith was thus different from Clement's, their ideas of knowledge were essentially identical. He agreed with Clement that faith is adequate to salvation but he recognized the importance of knowledge and insisted, as Clement did, that it represents a higher stage in the Christian life. Faith saves, but for perfection knowledge is required, and knowledge, as Origen understood it, covered a vast range of theological speculation. Much of his time and thought were given to this speculation. What Clement might have done had he written his *Didascalos* Origen did in his *De principiis*,³ the earliest system of Christian theology. The following passage from the preface is very characteristic: "Moreover it should be known that the holy apostles in preaching the faith of Christ spoke most clearly on certain matters which they believed to be neces-

¹ See above, p. 182.

² *De principiis*, pref. 2.

³ The Greek title of the work is *περὶ ἀρχῶν*: *Elements* or *First Principles*.

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sary for all believers, even for those who seemed slow in investigating divine science; but left the reason for their statements to be inquired into by those who have received the excellent gifts of the Spirit, particularly the gifts of language, wisdom and knowledge. On other subjects they merely declared that things were so, keeping silence as to how and whence they were. This they evidently did in order that the more studious of their successors, who might be lovers of wisdom, should have something whereon to display the fruits of their genius.”¹

Origen then gives a summary of the faith of the church concerning God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, future rewards and punishments and various other matters. In part the summary is identical in substance, though not in form, with the Old Roman Symbol as reproduced by Irenæus and Tertullian but it contains a number of items not found in that symbol: the freedom of the will, the existence of the devil and his angels, creation out of nothing in time, the destruction of the world because of wickedness, the inspiration of the Scriptures and their twofold meaning,² the existence of good angels who labor for the salvation of men.

To accept the beliefs of the church as given in the above summary was necessary to salvation according to Origen. To accept them was to have *pistis*, or faith, without which no one could be saved. To go on to a knowledge of the farther truth to be deduced from them or from the Scriptures was to have *gnosis*, or knowledge, the privilege of “lovers of wisdom” alone. In the search for the deeper truth accessible only to more advanced Christians Origen employed allegory, especially in his Biblical commentaries,

¹ *De prin.* pref. 3.

² In *De prin.* Bk. IV. chap. 2:4 (11), Origen ascribes to the Scriptures a three-fold meaning. As man has body, soul and spirit, so Scripture has a bodily (or literal), a psychical (or moral), and a spiritual (or symbolic) sense, the last the highest of all.

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on a large scale and with the same freedom as Clement. As a matter of fact he had even less regard for the literal meaning and was less hampered by it than the older theologian. He also used allegory, as many other Fathers did, as an apologetic instrument to remove the historical and moral difficulties which beset the Old Testament.¹ Unless interpreted figuratively, he declared, many Old Testament laws were worse than those of the heathen. In this respect the allegorical method served the ancient church as the historical method serves the modern Christian.

The distinction between faith and knowledge opened to Origen as to Clement the door for speculation and he practised it extensively. The limits within which speculation must move were drawn more narrowly than by Clement but as the event showed there was still abundant room for the exercise of the speculative genius.

Origen's theological system was of vast reach. Its main lines appear in his *De principiis* which must be supplemented however by his other works, especially the *Contra Celsum* and the *Homilies on Matthew, John and Romans*. Unfortunately the *De principiis*, except for parts of the third and fourth books, is extant only in the Latin translation of Rufinus. This is worse if possible than most translations, for in his desire to safeguard Origen's orthodoxy Rufinus deliberately altered the original whenever it seemed to stray too far from the common faith. Happily he was not as clear sighted as he might have been and left standing many passages that a keener-eyed theologian would have found suspicious, and happily too his alterations as a rule affected only details and not the substance of Origen's thinking, which is still to be discovered with sufficient clearness in the translated work.

¹ As also to explain the discrepancies between the Synoptic Gospels and John.

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I have spoken of the *De principiis* as the first systematic theology, but it is far from being a carefully articulated and well-ordered whole. It is repetitious, and full of digressions. The systematic intention, however, is evident, imperfectly though it was carried out, and the work serves to make clear Origen's main interests, his theological method, and the principal results of his thinking.

The work begins with the doctrine of God. This was prophetic, for until modern times nearly all treatises on systematic theology have begun thus. In his work against Celsus Origen says we must reach God not by speculation or by logic but through Christ's revelation.¹ In accordance with this principle he begins in his *De principiis* with Jesus' words recorded in the Fourth Gospel, "God is spirit," and then proceeds to point out the difference between spirit and body and to draw conclusions as to the divine nature. "It must be inquired into," he says in the preface, "how God himself is to be understood ; whether he is corporeal and formed according to a certain shape, or of another nature than bodies — a matter not clearly indicated in our teaching."² That Origen should have taken an ontological question like this as his starting point was characteristic of him. It was hardly the question that one who claimed that God is to be known through the revelation of Christ might have been expected to put in the forefront.

That God is a spirit was universally believed among Christians, but notions as to the nature of spirit differed widely, ranging all the way from that of the Stoics who thought of it as a finer sort of matter to that of Plato who made it of a different nature altogether. It was the latter interpretation that Origen accepted and he took great pains to make it clear to his readers and to rid the idea of spirit of all corporeal connotations. As spirit God is simple and indivisible. He

¹ *Contra Celsum*, VII. 44.

² *De prin.* pref. 9.

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is not made up of parts as bodies are and cannot be divided as they can. "God must not be thought of as any kind of a body or as if he were in a body, but as a simple intellectual nature, admitting no sort of addition; that it may not be believed that he has anything greater or less within him but is wholly one and so to speak a unit, both the mind and the source from which all intellectual nature or mind takes its beginning. But mind indeed that it may move or act needs no corporeal space or sensible size or bodily form or color or any other properties of body or matter. Wherefore that nature which is simply and wholly mind is able to move or accomplish anything without delay or tarrying."¹

In his work against Celsus Origen says: "Not understanding the things concerning the Spirit of God . . . Celsus frames a theory for himself, supposing that when we say God is spirit we differ in no way from the Stoics among the Greeks who declare that God is spirit diffused through all things and containing all things in himself. For the oversight and providence of God are all pervasive, but not like the spirit of the Stoics. And providence contains and embraces whatever is foreseen, but not as a containing body contains things, when that which is contained is also corporeal, but as a divine power embraces the things contained."²

God is also incomprehensible.³ He may be known however through his works. "Our mind, though unable to see God himself as he is, knows the parent of the universe from the beauty of his works and the comeliness of his creatures."⁴ Elsewhere Origen speaks of a divine sense or spiritual faculty by which we may perceive God as we perceive material things by our bodily senses. "For he (*i.e.* Solomon) knew that there are two kinds of senses in us, the one kind mortal,

¹ *De prin.* I. 1 : 6.

² *Contra Celsum*, VI. 71; cf. also VII. 38.

³ *De prin.* I. 1 : 5.

⁴ *Ibid.* I. 1 : 6.

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corruptible, human, the other immortal and intellectual, which he called divine. Therefore by this divine sense, not of the eyes but of a pure heart, which is the mind, God can be seen by those who are worthy.”¹ This has a mystical sound, but read in the light of Origen’s general attitude which is far from mystical, and of the passage quoted just above, the words can hardly mean more than the possession of such a cast of mind or religious disposition as leads a person to assume God upon the basis of phenomena that to another man may suggest no such conclusion. This is very commonly expressed today by the phrase “spiritually minded.”

Though Origen represented God as incomprehensible, his conception of him was less abstract and less negative than Clement’s, at least when the latter was thinking in philosophical terms. According to Origen God is incomprehensible only because greater than we can know or than can be measured. He built his doctrine of God upon the basis of a positive conception — that of spirit — instead of reaching it by the negative process of denying successively all the qualities of being. As spirit, God is living and active, not dead and inert like matter. He has within himself the power to do and is not simply acted upon from without as matter is. He is intelligent and is possessed of self-consciousness and will. He thus, as spirit, has all the attributes which attach to personality as we conceive it. The difference of method between Clement and Origen at this point was vital. While the problem of combining the God of philosophy with the God of religion was not adequately solved by Origen, he at least made the contrast between the two less glaring.

Having spoken of God in the opening chapter of the first book of his *De principiis*, Origen turns in the second chapter to Christ. At the very beginning he calls attention to the

¹ *De prin.* I. 1 : 9.

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distinction between the divine nature of Christ, by virtue of which he is the only begotten Son of God, and the human nature which he assumed when he appeared on earth. He then devotes himself to the former, leaving the human nature for later treatment. The Son of God was needed, according to Origen, as an agent of creation. God could not directly produce a world so unlike himself. There must be an intermediate step in the process from the absolute unity and simplicity of the divine nature to the multiplicity and complexity of the created universe. This intermediate step is the Son who is divine and yet subordinate.

He was called by Origen sometimes Logos (reason or word), sometimes Sophia (wisdom). This does not mean that Origen thought of him as impersonal or unsubstantial, as a mere attribute or faculty of God. On the contrary he thought of him as a real being, as truly personal as God himself.¹

Origen marked the distinction between God and the Son of God by calling the former *ὁ θεός*, the latter *θεός*.² Both are alike divine but the latter is subordinate to the former and so in some sense less than he.³ He is not self-existent as God is; he is produced by him. And he is produced for a purpose, that he may be God's agent in creation and revelation. That is what Origen meant when he called him the Son of God's will.⁴ The divine nature is not so constituted that it must necessarily exist in a twofold form as Father and Son, but the Son is needed for creation, and God therefore produces him in order that there may be a created universe.

The Son of God did not have his beginning in time; he

¹ *De prin.* I. 2:2.

² *Commentary on John*, Bk. II. chap. II.

³ In *Contra Celsum*, V. 39, Origen calls the Son of God a "second God" (*δευτερος θεός*), as Justin did, and elsewhere, *Commentary on John*, Bk. X. chap. XXXVII (21), distinguishes him numerically (*τῷ ἀριθμῷ*) from the Father and insists that while he is of the same essence (*οὐσία*) as the Father he is another than he *ὑποκειμένῳ* and *κατὰ ὑπόστασιν*.

⁴ *De prin.* IV (28).

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is eternal as God himself is. There was never a time when he was not. "Let him," Origen says, "who assigns a beginning to the Logos of God or the Wisdom of God take care, that he be not guilty of impiety against the unbegotten Father himself, since he denies that he was always a Father."¹ For a similar reason Origen represented the created universe as eternal, because if there was ever a time when it did not exist there must have been a time when God was not omnipotent, "for God cannot be called omnipotent unless there be those over whom he may exercise power."² It is interesting that Origen interpreted omnipotence not as potentiality, or the possession of power which might be employed if need arose, but as its actual exercise, and denied that God could be called omnipotent if his power were not made use of. It is interesting also that there underlay this whole discussion the belief that God cannot possibly be thought of as growing or developing or changing in any way. What he is at one time he must always have been and must always continue to be. The eternity of the universe was another reason for assuming the eternity of the Son of God. There must be a universe in order that God may be omnipotent but it cannot exist without the Son of God, the agent of creation. Both therefore must be alike eternal.

Though the Son of God and the universe are both eternal they are related to God in very different ways: the former is generated by him, the latter created, which means according to Origen that the former is produced from the nature of God while the latter is made out of nothing. The process of divine generation is incomprehensible. It is not to be confounded with creation. To be sure Origen spoke of the Son as a creature (*κρίσμα*),³ but it was clear to him

¹ *De prin.* I. 2 : 3. See also especially I. 2 : 2.

² *Ibid.* I. 2 : 10.

³ In a fragment in Lommatzsch's edit., vol. XXI. p. 482 (*πρωτόκοπος πάσης κτίσεως, κρίσμα, σοφία*).

that he was not a part of the created universe and was not made out of nothing as the latter was.¹ The use of the term creature therefore was misleading and did not represent Origen's real thought.

Being generated by God the Son, as already remarked, possesses the divine nature; he is of one substance or of the same substance as God not of another substance like the creature.² He is also eternal, not simply because produced before time or apart from time but because he is always and continuously produced. "The Father did not beget the Son once for all, and let him go after he was begotten but he is always begetting him."³ Origen's phrase for this — "the eternal generation" of the Son — became classic in Christian theology.

While the process of generation is not to be confounded with creation it is also not to be confounded with emanation, for emanation implies division of substance and this is impossible with indivisible spirit. "Rather therefore as willing proceeds from the mind and neither cuts off any part of the mind nor is separated or divided from it so in some such way the Father must be thought of as having generated the Son, his own image."⁴ The most that one can say about the process is that it is identical neither with creation nor with emanation and that whatever its nature it means that God and the Son are of one substance not of different substances as God and the created universe are.

In the summary of the faith of the church given in the preface to his *De principiis* Origen mentions the Holy Spirit as "associated in honour and dignity with the Father and the Son." Accordingly after completing what he has to say

¹ *De prin.* I. 2 : 5, 10.

² Origen used the word *ὁμοούσιος* according to a Latin fragment from his *Commentary on Hebrews*, in Lommatzsch's edit., vol. V. p. 300.

³ Homily IX on Jeremiah, section 4.

⁴ *De prin.* I. 2 : 6.

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about God and Christ he turns in the third chapter of the first book to the Spirit. The existence of God and even of the Son of God or Logos is recognized, he says, by others than Christians, but no one could suspect the existence of the Holy Spirit unless a follower of Christ or familiar with the Scriptures. In speaking of the Father and the Son Origen was speaking as a philosopher not simply as a Christian. His philosophy was such as to make necessary not only a supreme self-existent divine being but also a divine agent of creation. But his philosophy required no Holy Spirit and in speaking of the latter he spoke as a Christian only not as a philosopher. The Bible and Christian tradition and particularly the baptismal formula with its mention of Father, Son and Spirit made it necessary to assume the existence of the Spirit; other reason there was none. Like Justin Martyr Origen found it difficult to make a place for the Spirit and to distinguish clearly between his functions and those of the Son. Had the function of the Son been solely to create there would have been no trouble. But the Son was also revealer and Saviour so that there seemed nothing left for the Spirit to do. It was the common belief among the churches, Origen says, that the Spirit inspired the prophets and apostles.¹ Elsewhere he declares that the Son reveals truth through the Holy Spirit,² without indicating what he means, and that the Spirit reveals the deeper things of God which the disciples could not bear while Jesus was yet with them.³ But why the Spirit was needed as an agent of revelation in addition to the Son or Logos Origen evidently had no idea. He simply followed Scripture and tradition in making room for him in connection

¹ *De prin.* pref. 4.

² *Ibid.* I. 3 : 4. Later in the same paragraph he says that the Spirit derives his knowledge not from the Son but directly from the Father as the Son does.

³ *Ibid.* Cf. also II. 7 : 4.

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with the work of revelation, and the result was serious confusion.

The difficulty in which Origen found himself in thinking of the Spirit is still farther shown by his explicit assertion that "everyone that walketh upon the earth is a partaker of the Holy Spirit" ¹ while later in the same chapter he declares that "a share in the Holy Spirit we find possessed only by the saints." The latter was evidently his real opinion. Only by confining the work of the Spirit to Christians alone was he able to find a distinctive place for him. "I think," he says, "that the Father and the Son work in saints as well as in sinners, in rational beings and in dumb animals and even in things without life, in fact in everything that exists; but that the Holy Spirit does not work in those things which are without life, or in dumb animals, or even in rational beings that are engaged in evil practices and have not been converted to better things. On the contrary I think that the Spirit is active only in those who are already turning to better things and are walking in the way of Christ Jesus, that is those who are engaged in good deeds and abide in God." ²

And so the chief function of the Holy Spirit according to Origen was to promote holiness in the followers of Christ. If the Son is the Saviour the Spirit is the Sanctifier. It is worth remarking that in this part of the *De principiis* Origen says nothing of the saving work of Christ. He can therefore speak as he does of the sanctifying work of the Spirit without being compelled to show how sanctification is related to salvation as later theologians found themselves obliged to do. The truth is that Origen's mind was in confusion concerning the whole subject of salvation as it was concerning the work of the Holy Spirit. His real interest indeed lay elsewhere.

¹ *Ibid.* I. 3 : 4; cf. II. 7 : 2.

² *Ibid.* I. 3 : 5; cf. I. 3 : 8.

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As Origen found it difficult to distinguish the functions of the Spirit from those of the Son he found it difficult also to determine the exact relationship of the Spirit to the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit must be eternal for he "would never have been reckoned in the unity of the Trinity, that is, of the unchangeable God the Father and his Son, unless he had always been the Holy Spirit."¹ As the Spirit has to do with the saints alone while Father and Son have to do both with good and bad and with the animate as well as the inanimate creation, it might be thought that the dignity of the Spirit is greater than theirs. But this Origen denied emphatically, declaring explicitly that "nothing in the Trinity can be called greater or less."² Whether the Spirit was begotten or unbegotten Origen says was not determined by tradition and he does not give his own opinion in the matter, but he declares that he has found no statements in Scripture to the effect that the Spirit was made or created such as are found concerning Wisdom and Logos and Son of God.³ This however does not mean that the Spirit was greater than the Son, that while the latter was begotten the Spirit was unbegotten as the Father was. It only means that the way in which the Spirit came into existence is quite unknown.

Although as already seen Origen explicitly says that "nothing in the Trinity can be called greater or less," and although he insists that Father, Son and Spirit are all alike eternal, there is nevertheless a marked subordinationism in his Trinity. In the Trinity are Father and Son not because the nature of God is such that it must exist in a dual form

¹ *De prin.* I. 3 : 5.

² *Ibid.* I. 3 : 7. Loofs denies the authenticity of this sentence and ascribes it to Rufinus because of a contrary statement in a fragment quoted by Lommatsch, vol. XXI. p. 78, note 2. But the contradiction is no more glaring than many others in Origen's writings.

³ *Ibid.* I. 3 : 3.

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but because creation demands a creating agent and hence there must be Son as well as Father. In other words the necessity is cosmical, or to use a traditional theological term, economic ; that is, it is due to God's relation to the world or to something outside himself. Because of this Origen was always more interested in the subordination of the Son to the Father than in his oneness with him. Not that he ever questioned the latter but it was upon the former that the stress fell. He was particularly opposed to modalism which sacrificed the distinction of Father, Son and Spirit for the sake of their oneness. His concern in this whole matter was evidently more philosophical than religious.

Because he was feeling his way in regions hitherto little explored, and frequently used terms which later acquired technical meanings unlike his own, Origen was widely misunderstood in succeeding generations. But whether they understood him or not it was difficult for those who came after to follow him exactly. It was almost inevitable that the distinctions within the Trinity should be emphasized at the expense of the oneness or the oneness at the expense of the distinctions. Those who took the former course were nearer Origen than those who took the latter. The oneness which he tried to maintain while emphasizing subordination could hardly have been preserved permanently had not other considerations intervened to balance the philosophical interest that actuated him. But of this later.

It was said above that according to Origen the created universe is eternal, for there must be something outside of God in order that he may be omnipotent. But the universe to which Origen refers in this connection is not the material world in the midst of which we live but the world of spirits. The universe consists of two parts, spiritual and material. Both were created out of nothing, but the former is eternal, the latter temporal. The former is made up

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of rational spirits, free because rational, perfect because created by a perfect God, and equal because created by a just God and also because there was no reason in the nature of the case for making them unequal.¹

These eternal spirits were created that they might enjoy everlasting communion with God their creator. Being free, some of them chose virtue and won the reward of permanent and unbroken communion with God. These are the good angels. Others went to the opposite extreme and chose only evil. These are the demons or the devil and his followers. Still others pursued a middle course, less virtuous than the angels, less vicious than the demons. These we call men.² The physical universe was created in time, or with time, as a place of training for human beings.³ Born into the world and given material bodies, their preëxistent spirits are subjected to discipline until they learn to choose good and eschew evil. The world is thus interpreted teleologically. It was made for the good of men and to minister to their salvation.

By putting men's fall before the beginning of their earthly life Origen explained both the universality of human sin and the inequalities in men's fortunes and opportunities without casting suspicion upon the justice of God. All men are sinners, not because Adam fell (his fall Origen regards as symbolic only)⁴ but because they themselves sinned in their preëxistent state. And some are born in happier circumstances than others because their characters are better. Origen concludes an extended account of the matter with the following words: "On which account neither will the Creator seem unjust when for the reasons already mentioned he distributes to each one according to his merits, nor will the happiness or unhappiness of anyone's birth,

¹ *De prin.* I. 7 : 1; III. 5; II. 9.

² *Ibid.* I. 8; II. 9.

³ *Ibid.* III. 5 : 4 ff.

⁴ *Contra Celsum*, IV. 40.

or whatever the condition that falls to his lot, be deemed fortuitous, nor will different creators or souls of different natures be assumed to exist.”¹

Salvation means the restoration of fallen spirits to their original oneness with God. This is accomplished by the Logos or Wisdom and by the Holy Spirit, the former instructing men, the latter sanctifying them.² Without this instruction and help no one can meet temptation and gain virtue and achieve that likeness to God which is the highest boon.³ Help however will be given only to those who desire it and who strive to do right.⁴ Men have not lost the freedom they possess as rational creatures, but the habit of sin and the temptations of the flesh make it difficult to avoid evil and they must constantly struggle against it. Good and bad angels are always seeking to influence them and carry on a constant battle with each other to secure the mastery over them for weal or woe.⁵

In order to promote human salvation the Logos or Son of God became incarnate that he might be seen by men and might show them by example as well as precept the way of life.⁶ Unlike Clement Origen was much interested in the incarnation and it was characteristic of him that the method of it particularly intrigued him.⁷ The divine Logos could not directly assume a human body, the unlikeness between them being too great. He therefore united with one of the created spirits who by his preëminent virtue had proved himself worthy of the honour. This spirit, joined to the divine Logos, took on a human body, thus becoming a human

¹ *De prin.* II. 9 : 6.

² *Ibid.* I. 3 : 8.

³ *Ibid.* III. 2 : 5 ; 6 : 1.

⁴ *Ibid.* III. 2 : 3 ; 3 : 4. See the long defence of the freedom of the will in III. 1.

⁵ *Ibid.* III. 2 : 1.

⁶ *Ibid.* IV. 31 ; cf. *Contra Celsum*, VI. 68.

⁷ Cf. *De prin.* II. 6 : 3 ff. ; IV. 31 ; *Contra Celsum*, IV. 15 ff.

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soul, and advanced step by step until he attained complete divinity. This human person with a human soul and body is known as the Son of God, as the Logos also is, so that the term Son of God is used in two senses, to denote the Logos, divine from all eternity, and the human being who became divine by a life of perfect virtue. The Son of God who suffered and died upon the cross was the latter not the former, the human being not the eternal divine Logos.

The saving work of Christ, the incarnate Logos, was commonly represented by Origen as a work of instruction. Christ showed men the will of God both by teaching and example, telling them of the future rewards and punishments to follow on obedience or disobedience and opening to them the depths of wisdom and knowledge reserved for those competent to understand. In this Origen was entirely consistent. But like other apologists for Christianity he was interested to give as many explanations as he could of Christ's death. Thus under the influence of Jesus' words about giving his life a ransom for many he spoke of Christ's paying a price to the devil in order to secure man's release.¹ The notion had appeared already in Irenæus and was common among the Fathers for a number of centuries. It is quite out of harmony, however, with Origen's usual way of looking at things and must not be taken too seriously.

The same may be said of certain passages in his writings of a more or less mystical character which suggest a realistic or physical interpretation of Christ's work similar to that of Irenæus.² They are quite exceptional, and incon-

¹ See his *Commentary on Matthew*, Bk. XIII. 8-9; XVI. 8; *Commentary on Romans*, Bk. II. 13. In agreement with some of the Gnostics, Origen maintained that God offered the devil the soul of Christ in exchange for the souls of men, and that Satan accepted the offer, not knowing, as God did, that he would be unable to hold Christ after he had him in his possession. Origen seems not to have been troubled by the deceit practised by God, for to deceive one's enemy was generally regarded as quite legitimate.

² Cf. e.g. *De prin.* I. 3 : 8; *Contra Celsum*, III. 28.

sistent as they are with his general conception of salvation, which like Clement's was moral not physical, they must not be pressed. This becomes all the clearer when we find him teaching that Christ saves demons as well as men, though they have no human nature to be affected by the incarnation. How the salvation of demons is to be brought about he does not say, confining himself wholly to what Christ did for the human race.

Origen had an elaborate eschatology. He believed in or at least he hoped for the final restoration of all rational creatures, not only men but also demons, including even the arch fiend himself.¹ The pains of hell are disciplinary in purpose and will be temporary only, not everlasting.² When the present world has come to an end the material substance of which it is composed will be employed for the formation of another world in which the spirits of men not yet perfected will be still further disciplined and so it will go on until all have been redeemed when matter being unredeemable will be finally destroyed.³ The future life will be a life of the spirit; the flesh will have no part in it. The joys of heaven and the pains of hell will be mental not material.⁴

Of all the early Fathers Origen was most bitterly opposed to chiliasm or premillenarianism and everything that it implied, and no one did more than he for its final defeat.⁵ To be sure he believed in a bodily resurrection. No spirit, he says, can exist without a body except God.⁶ But the bodies of the redeemed will be spiritual not fleshly.⁷ Their earthly bodies will be transformed into others better suited

¹ *De prin.* I. 6.

² *Ibid.* II. 10 : 6; cf. *Contra Celsum*, IV. 15.

³ See Lommatzsch's edit., vol. XXI. p. 358, note 6.

⁴ *De prin.* II. 10 : 4 ff.

⁵ *Ibid.* II. 11 : 2.

⁶ *Ibid.* I. 6 : 4; II. 2 : 2.

⁷ *Ibid.* II. 2 : 2; 3 : 2; 10; III. 6 : 4.

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to the conditions of the heavenly realm in which they are to dwell. Perhaps more than anything else Origen's spiritualizing of the future life and his denial of the resurrection of the flesh caused offence, for to many the necessary consequence seemed to be that the life beyond the grave is without reality.

Origen's theodicy, including his belief in human preëxistence and in the ultimate restoration of all spirits, was drawn on a magnificent scale. Human preëxistence had been taught by others before him, notably by Plato, but he was the first Christian to adopt it, so far as we know, and his universalism was all his own. The optimism of his outlook, even though not always maintained with assurance, was very impressive, but it was too lofty and too broad for his contemporaries and successors. The contrast between Christians and other men seemed not sufficiently guaranteed if all were ultimately to be saved, and the hostility of the world to the church of Christ not sufficiently recompensed except by everlasting misery. So Origen's splendid theodicy remained but a passing episode in Christian thought.

His influence was felt rather in the sphere of theology proper than in anthropology, soteriology, and eschatology. The Irenæan doctrine of Adam's fall and of salvation by the union of divine and human nature in the incarnation, and the common traditional notions of everlasting punishment, prevailed both in east and west in spite of Origen's divergent views. But his doctrine of God and particularly his ideas of the relation between the Father and the Son were widely accepted and carried further by those who came after him.

His speculations were intended for theologians only not for the rank and file. For the latter it was enough to accept the traditional faith of the church as formulated at the beginning of his *De principiis*. How far he was from regarding his views as binding on others is shown by such a

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passage as the following: "These things have occurred to us at present concerning matters so difficult to discuss as the incarnation and deity of Christ. If anyone can find something better and can confirm what he says by clear proofs from Holy Scripture let his opinion be preferred to ours." ¹

But the distinction which he drew between faith and knowledge was not generally allowed. The truth, it was commonly maintained, is one; and unity was esteemed of fundamental importance. To separate faith and knowledge and recognize the former as sufficient for the mass of Christians, the latter as the peculiar possession of the spiritual élite, was to destroy the unity of the church which must be one in belief if in nothing else. Origen's speculations therefore had for those that came after him a much more serious significance than for him. Either they represented the truth or they did not. If they did they must be embraced by all Christians as a part of the common faith of the church; if they did not they must be repudiated altogether.

During the next few generations controversy over his views engrossed the attention of the leaders of the eastern church to the exclusion of almost everything else. The discussion was carried on by the theologians, who alone understood the issues involved, but the rank and file regarded it as their concern as well and were often as eager in their partisanship as the theologians themselves. The matters in dispute were generally regarded as vital; to accept the right view was to be sound in the faith, to accept the wrong view was to be a heretic. For the former the way of salvation was open, for the latter there was only the fate of the unbelieving heathen. Because many of his opinions finally failed to secure approval Origen himself was condemned by more than one council centuries after his death, and that

¹ *De prin.* II. 6 : 7.

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despite his own sharp distinction between the faith necessary to be believed and the ideas that might be deduced from it, which anyone was at liberty to accept or not as he pleased.

It was Origen's achievement to set the theological problems for centuries to come. The history of Christian thought in the east from his time on is largely the history of his ideas, that is, his ideas of God. He left a flourishing school of disciples who were for some time the principal theologians of the eastern church. But his influence was broader than his school and was felt by many who counted themselves opponents of all for which he stood. He did much to legitimize theological speculation and to promote an interest in it. Christianity at any rate in the east was for long regarded not simply as faith and life but as philosophy, and to this result Origen, following Clement's lead, contributed more than anyone else. His curiosity was insatiable, but it concerned itself chiefly with things that lie beyond the reach of human faculties. To penetrate the depths of divine truth, to fathom the divine nature, to discover what was before the dawn of time and what shall be after time is no more — this was his lifelong ambition. In the effort to know what in the nature of the case could not be known he spent his energies and he fired those that came after him with his aspiration. The Apologists too had called Christianity a philosophy but they meant by it chiefly moral philosophy, not ontology and cosmology as it came to be in the hands of Origen. Moreover they were speaking as apologists and their interpretation of Christianity had little significance when the need of apologetics was past.

Origen also did much to promote the reign of deductive logic in theology. To take an idea or a word derived from Scripture or from apostolic tradition as embodying a truth and then to go on to the discovery of farther truth by

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analyzing the idea and drawing out its implications — this became a standing method in theology. God is spirit. That being admitted, it was enough instead of studying God's activities as revealed in nature and history, to ask, What is spirit? What is its nature? How does it act? in order to know what God is and how he acts. The authority of Scripture and tradition was recognized but they constituted merely the starting point for the work of deductive logic. To stick close to them, to accept only what they explicitly contained and to refrain from going beyond them in any way, was far from Origen's thought. The materials with which the logician had to deal were to be drawn from Scripture and tradition, not from experience or observation; they were revealed by God not discovered by men, and they must be taken on trust and accepted unquestioningly. But to elucidate them, to discover their implications and draw the necessary conclusions — this was the work of human reason. Thus authority and reason were combined and in orthodox circles the combination has remained unbroken to the present day.

CHAPTER XII

THE MONARCHIANS ¹

FROM the start the belief that Christ was a god was widespread among Gentile Christians. They did not begin, as was true of the early Jewish disciples, with the man Jesus and go on as many of the latter never did to the belief in him as divine. On the contrary, they began with the Lord Jesus Christ, a divine saviour who had come down from heaven and had returned thither after his work here was finished. Their difficulty was with his humanity rather than with his divinity. The latter they took for granted; the former they were not always sure about and some of them, as has been seen, denied it altogether. The apostle Paul combined his belief in the divinity of Christ with his Jewish belief in God, the creator and ruler of the world, by calling the former the Son of the latter, and he was followed generally by those Gentile Christians who took over from Judaism the God worshipped by the Jews.

But there were many who felt that to call Jesus the Son of God was to detract from his dignity and to deprive him of the place that rightly belonged to him. They were interested primarily in salvation rather than creation and the Saviour was more to them than the Creator. In these circumstances they could not consent to have the supreme place assigned to the Creator and the Saviour subordinated to him. The divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was the

¹ To avoid confusion Monarchianism both in east and west will be dealt with in this chapter.

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only God they needed. To associate another God with him and particularly to put another God above him offended them deeply. If it were necessary to recognize a creating as well as a saving God, then the Lord Jesus Christ whom they worshipped, and faith in whom had brought them into the Christian church, was himself creator as well as saviour; they neither knew nor cared to know any other God apart from him. The earliest explicit reference to Christians such as these is found in Justin Martyr's Apology. "Those who say the Son is Father are proved neither to be acquainted with the Father nor to know that the Father of the universe has a son, who being Logos and first born of God is God."¹

It is not likely that in the beginning Christ was called Father by these Christians. It was not a name commonly applied to the lords of the cult in the redemptive religions of the age and it can hardly have suggested itself as a title for the saviour Christ except in protest against those who were giving the title to another God and were subordinating Christ to him. In the Christian literature of the period Father commonly signified Father of the universe, the creator and ruler of the world.² To apply the term to Christ meant to claim for him this dignity and thus to recognize him as more than a mere saviour. Writing early in the third century Hippolytus of Rome says, "Cleomenes and his followers declare that he (*i.e.*, Christ) is the God and Father of the universe."³

Whether the Christians I am speaking of came to feel the need of a creating as well as a redeeming God — as they may well have done in view of the common belief of their fellow-disciples — or whether their recognition of Christ as creator

¹ *Apol.* I. 63.

² See my *Apostles' Creed*, p. 108.

³ Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, Bk. IX. chap. 10. (*Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* vol. 26; in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Bk. IX., chap. 5.)

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was due only to the desire to prevent his subordination to another God, is not certain. Probably both motives coöperated. The interest in monotheism may also have had some influence. Tertullian says, "They accuse us of preaching two and three gods while they claim that they are worshippers of one God."¹ And he gave them the name of Monarchians on this account.² The name has clung to them but it certainly does not represent their primary interest. However great its religious and moral value may be in unifying human life and centering it upon one supreme object of loyalty and devotion, monotheism has been as a rule a matter of particular concern only to theologians or philosophers not to the unthinking masses, however pious. In the present instance, in the light of what we know about these Monarchians, it may fairly be assumed that they emphasized it, if they emphasized it at all, more on polemic than on religious or ethical grounds. Very likely many if not most of them cared little how many divine beings might be recognized provided they were not placed above the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and did not detract from his dignity and worth.

Distrust of philosophy also had not a little to do with the attitude of these particular Christians. The doctrine of the Logos which subordinated Christ to the Father and made him an agent in creation and revelation was primarily philosophical not religious, and many of them looked upon it with suspicion. The intrusion of philosophy they felt was bound to play havoc with the Christian faith as it was already doing, so they believed, with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever the motives that controlled them there were large numbers of such Christians and by the end of the second century at any rate, if not before, they were causing several theologians profound solicitude.³

¹ *Adv. Praxeas*, chap. 3.

² *Ibid.*, chap. 10.

³ See my *God of the Early Christians*, pp. 78 ff.

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The opposition to them was due not to religious but to philosophical considerations. If there were no distinction between Christ and the Father then the supreme God, the creator of the universe, must have appeared on earth, must have been born of a virgin, lived as a man among men, and suffered and died on the cross. This appeared absurd to the more philosophically minded and it also threatened, so they felt, to make the acceptance of Christianity impossible for the intellectual classes. In his work against Praxeas Tertullian says: "How is it that the omnipotent, invisible God, whom no man hath seen or can see, who inhabiteth light inaccessible, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, at whose sight the earth trembles and the mountains melt like wax, who holdeth the whole world in his hand as in a nest, whose throne is heaven and whose footstool is the earth, in whom is every place and he in none, who is the extreme boundary of the universe — how is it, I say, that the Most High should have walked at evening in paradise seeking Adam, and should have closed the ark after Noah's entrance, and at Abraham's should have cooled himself under an oak, and should have called to Moses from out the burning bush, and should have appeared as the fourth in the furnace of the Babylonian king (though he is called there the son of man), unless these things were an image and a type and an allegory? These things indeed could not have been believed even of the Son of God, had they not been written; perhaps they could not have been believed of the Father even had they been written. For these persons bring him down into Mary's womb, place him at Pilate's tribunal, and shut him in the tomb of Joseph. Hence their error becomes evident. For, being ignorant that from the beginning the entire order of the divine administration has had its course through the Son, they believe that the Father himself was seen and conversed and worked and thirsted

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and suffered hunger, in spite of the prophet who says, 'The eternal God shall neither thirst at all nor be hungry,' much more shall he not die or be buried. Thus they believe that it was always one God, the Father, who did the things which were really done through the Son." ¹

Tertullian indicates elsewhere that the Christians to whom he refers in this passage were in the majority in his day and that they consisted chiefly of the ignorant and simple-minded.² Doubtless he was right in thinking that they were for the most part ordinary Christians not theologians, for their belief was not the result of theological reflection but simply the utterance of pious hearts which found in Jesus Christ everything they needed or desired. But before the end of the second century theologians appeared to defend their position and to give it the dignity of a regular theological doctrine. Among these theologians was Praxeas of Asia Minor who was in Rome already under Bishop Victor (189-198) and apparently made his way later to North Africa. He was an opponent of the Montanists and was attacked by Tertullian in his *Adversus Praxean* from which I have already quoted. Another theologian representing the same general position was Noetus of Asia Minor, with whom were associated Epigonus and Cleomenes. They came to Rome early in the third century and there won many adherents, among them Bishop Zephyrinus and Callixtus, who later succeeded him in the episcopate, as well as Sabellius who became ultimately the most important and famous theologian of the movement. Their principal foe was Hippolytus, the most notable Roman theologian of the day. He wrote a brief work against Noetus³ which with Tertullian's *Adversus Praxean* is our

¹ *Adv. Praxean*, chap. 16; cf. Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum*, chap. 18.

² *Adv. Praxean*, chap. 3.

³ This is perhaps only the concluding portion of a larger work against the Monarchians now lost. Hippolytus attacked these Modalistic Monarchians also in his *Refutatio omnium haeresium*.

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principal source for a knowledge of the teachings of these Monarchians, as Tertullian calls them, or Modalistic Monarchians (or Modalists) as they are commonly called by modern historians to distinguish them from the Dynamic Monarchians of whom I shall speak later.

Their original position was very simple and quite without theological complications. Christ is the Father, the creator of heaven and earth. It is the Father that appeared on earth, was born of a virgin, and suffered and died on the cross. The arguments urged in support of this position were chiefly Scriptural: "I and the Father are one"; "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" and other similar utterances.¹ But it seems that some of Noetus' followers supplied a philosophical basis for the doctrine, affirming that God is visible or invisible, limited or unlimited, as he pleases, and that no Logos is needed to mediate between him and the world. This represented, whether consciously or not, the Stoic as distinguished from the Platonic ontology, immanence rather than transcendence, but it was out of line with the prevailing philosophical tendency and found little favor within the church.

Because these Modalists asserted that the Father had suffered and died on the cross they were called Patripassians by their opponents. In order to meet the accusation of Patripassianism, which seems to have annoyed them more than it should, Callixtus and some others drew a distinction between the Father and the Son. Both are alike God, they are in fact identically the same being, but God in the flesh is called the Son while apart from the flesh he is called the Father.² It was therefore the Son that suffered and died

¹ Cf. Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum*. Hippolytus' own arguments in reply are also largely Scriptural, consisting for the most part in the citation and exposition of passages distinguishing between God and Christ, or the Father and the Son.

² This reminds us of Irenæus.

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not the Father. The distinction was purely verbal but it enabled certain of the Modalists to deny that they were Patripassians.¹

The most elaborate and carefully articulated form of Modalistic Monarchianism, or Modalism, was that of Sabellius. He seems to have been interested more than the others in preserving the unity of God and he insisted in the strongest possible way that God is one person as well as one substance. As one person he is indivisible but he has three energies or operations: creating and governing, redeeming, regenerating and sanctifying. As creator and governor God is called Father, as redeemer he is called Son, as regenerator and sanctifier he is called Holy Spirit. But it is one and the same God, one and the same divine person, who acts in all these ways. The difference is not in being or person, but in function or activity. Each of these functions or activities — Father, Son and Spirit — was called by Sabellius *prosopon* (πρόσωπον), the Greek word of which the Latin translation is *persona*. The word means not person but face, and was used for the mask worn by actors in the theatre or for the part they played.

These *prosopa* or faces are not simultaneous, according to Sabellius, but successive. God acts as Father, as Son, and as Spirit, not all at the same time but successively, turning from one activity to the other or wearing one or the other character as need requires. At times Sabellius seems to have thought of the activity of the Father as continuous — God is always the ruler of the world — and only the activities of Son and Spirit as successive, for God's redeeming work was finished before his regenerating and sanctifying work began, and the latter is still going on. But this whole aspect of Sabellius' thought is involved in obscurity. Ap-

¹ See Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, IX. 12 (in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, IX. 7).

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parently he himself never reached complete clearness in the matter.

Sabellius became the principal leader of the Modalists in Rome and was opposed, as the other Modalists were, by Hippolytus, a champion of the Logos Christology. For the sake of peace Bishop Callixtus (217-222), although himself a Modalist, excommunicated both Sabellius and Hippolytus, the leaders of the two hostile groups, and set up his own compromising formula to which I have already referred. The subsequent history is obscure. Though excommunicated Hippolytus was in good standing again within a few years, and by 250 the Logos Christology, which he supported and which finds clear expression in Novatian's work on the Trinity, written sometime before the middle of the century, was supreme in Rome and Modalism had come to be generally recognized as a heresy. Doubtless Hippolytus and Tertullian as well as Novatian contributed to this result.

After his excommunication by Callixtus Sabellius drops out of sight. He may have gone east though we have no direct evidence that he did. At any rate he had large influence in that part of the world where his name was early given to the movement as a whole. In the east the greatest foe of Monarchianism in every form was Origen. After he left Alexandria in 230 Modalism spread rapidly in Egypt and became strongly entrenched throughout the country. It was also widely prevalent in Asia Minor, probably quite independently of Sabellius, though there too his name became attached to it.

Modalism was exceedingly difficult to overcome. It was shared by the majority of the common people and was in harmony with the dominant piety of the age. "What harm am I doing in glorifying Christ?" was the question of Noetus¹ and in it he voiced the sentiment of multitudes.

¹ Hippolytus, *Contra Noetum*, chap. I.

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Modalism in fact was offensive only to theologians, particularly to those who felt the influence of the Platonic philosophy. Despite its condemnation in Rome and the establishment of the Logos Christology there and elsewhere the tendency toward Modalism has always been strong in the west. In the east, on the other hand, where Plato had more influence, the tendency has been rather the other way. But of this later.

Meanwhile another sort of Monarchianism at the opposite pole from Modalism became current both in east and west. In its simplest form it meant the recognition of Christ as a mere man who at the time of his baptism was adopted by God as his son and was endowed with power from above. It is therefore commonly known as Dynamic Monarchianism, or Adoptionism, though neither name is ancient. Among the earliest exponents of it known to us was Theodotus, a leather dealer, commonly called Theodotus the elder to distinguish him from a younger man of the same name, Theodotus the money-changer, who was one of his disciples. Theodotus the elder came to Rome from Smyrna about 190 and there taught that Christ was a mere man adopted by God and divinely endowed at the time of his baptism. His arguments in support of his position seem to have been exclusively Biblical and were drawn chiefly from the Synoptic Gospels.

We have an entertaining though hostile account of the Theodotians in an anonymous work known as the Little Labyrinth, fragments of which are preserved in the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, Book V, chapter 28.¹ In this document the author attacks them for practising textual criticism and for using the grammatical, or literal, method of exegesis in their interpretation of Scripture. Also he

¹ On Theodotus and his school see also Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, VII. 35; X. 23 (*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, VII. 23; X. 19).

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denounces them, curiously enough, for their scientific pursuits. "Euclid," he says, "is laboriously measured by some of them; and Aristotle and Theophrastus are admired; and Galen, perhaps, by some is even worshipped." Apparently Theodotus and his followers found the scientists more congenial than religious philosophers like Plato and the Stoics. Their tendency, in fact, seems to have been rationalistic rather than mystical, and because of this the author of the *Little Labyrinth* thought them no better than heathen.

It is difficult to gather from our meagre sources the fundamental interest of Theodotus. The account in the *Little Labyrinth* suggests that he was moved wholly by rational considerations and by temperamental hostility to mysticism. But it may well be that an ethical motive was also operative and led him to wish to recover the figure of the man Jesus Christ which was largely lost sight of in the common emphasis on his divinity. However that may be he was wholly out of line with the prevailing tendencies of the age, both with the religious spirit that spoke in Modalism and with the Platonic philosophy that came to expression in the Logos Christology. It is therefore not surprising that he found little sympathy among his fellow-Christians whether theologians or laymen. Within a few years of his arrival in Rome he was condemned by Bishop Victor in behalf of Modalism. There were still Adoptionists in Rome after Victor's time but they were few and unimportant and had practically no influence upon the development of thought in the west.

In the east, on the other hand, there was a significant revival of the movement in the latter part of the third century under the leadership of Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch and a civil official under Queen Zenobia of Palmyra, of whose kingdom Antioch was at that time the capital. Paul was the most important of all the Adoptionists and one

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of the most interesting figures in the early church. It was unusual in that age for a Christian ecclesiastic to hold political office. Many of Paul's contemporaries, consequently, were scandalized and accused him, whether with or without justification we do not know, of all the vices that were supposed to go with political power: pride, arrogance, worldliness and the like. His political affiliations and the rivalry between the see of Antioch and that of Alexandria, which later assumed large proportions, may have made it easier for him to set himself in opposition to the prevailing currents of thought in Alexandria and in the church at large, but back of all this was his own profound concern in the real humanity of Jesus which he feared was in danger of being lost sight of altogether as a consequence of the prevalence of the Logos Christology.

Our sources for a knowledge of Paul's teachings are all too meagre,¹ but we know more about him than about Theodotus and his followers, and whatever may have been true of the latter it is clear that Paul's interest was predominantly ethical: to restore simple faith in the man Jesus Christ, the pattern and exemplar of all Christians. He was evidently moved also by a genuinely religious motive: to recover the primitive faith in a personal God and Father which was threatened by the theological speculations particularly of the Alexandrian school. Of the scientific pre-occupations of Theodotus and his followers in Rome there is no hint in the accounts we have of Paul. He is said to have been a disciple of Artemon, one of the Roman Adoptionists, but whether the report is correct we do not know, nor indeed whether he was in any way connected with the movement in Rome.

¹ See Harnack, *Altkristliche Literaturgeschichte*, I. 520 ff.; II. 135 ff. The extant fragments are given by Loofs, *Paulus von Samosata*, pp. 323 ff. Loofs' interpretation of Paul which minimizes his adoptionism seems to me to do violence to the sources and to be largely erroneous.

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Paul's primary interest, as has been said, was the real humanity of Jesus. In order to safeguard this he denied that Christ had come down from above, or was the incarnation of the Logos or of any other being, and insisted that he was only a man. There is indeed no such person as the Logos. The divine logos or reason is simply an attribute or faculty of God, similar to, though of course more perfect than the reason of man.

It is interesting to notice in this connection that according to Paul an essential union between two persons is impossible. There can be a unity of will or purpose but no unity of being or substance. "Different natures," he says, "and different persons have only one way of uniting, namely, by an agreement of will."¹ In other words Paul was what we should call a nominalist and rejected the Platonic realism which underlay most of the Christological speculation of the day. This meant that like Theodotus and his school he felt the influence, whether consciously or not, of Aristotle rather than of Plato.

Still more significant than Paul's denial that a unity of essence between two persons is possible was his contention that even if it were it could not be known and would not be important. The only unity that has any worth is that of will and purpose. To seek for something more fundamental is vain and if it could be found it would be valueless — a decidedly modern position altogether alien to the common thought of Paul's time.

The man Jesus Christ according to Paul was by no means an ordinary man. On the contrary he was endowed at birth

¹ From the second fragment of the *Λόγοι πρὸς Σαβίνον* (reprinted by Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*⁴, vol. I. p. 726 and Loofs, *Paulus von Samosata*, p. 339). The authenticity of these fragments has been questioned but without sufficient warrant. See on the one side Loofs, *op. cit.* pp. 283 ff., on the other, Harnack, *Die Reden Pauls von Samosata an Sabinus* (in *Die Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, July 10, 1924).

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with the divine reason or wisdom (Paul used the two words interchangeably) and lived wholly at one with God, loving him unalterably and fulfilling his will perfectly in all things. As a consequence he was raised from the dead, was given divine authority, and was appointed to be the judge and saviour of men. He is therefore now to be recognized as Lord and to be worshipped as such. Paul was even willing that he should be given the name God if it were clearly understood that he was not God in himself but had only been granted the title and the honour that went with it as a reward for his virtue and the constancy of his devotion to the divine will. Paul thus had a lofty conception of Christ and it proved exceedingly difficult to show that he was heretical. His opponents, however, finally succeeded in securing his condemnation at a synod of Antioch held in 268, two earlier synods having failed to take action in the matter. He was condemned for denying the preëxistence of Christ, and his condemnation was a decisive victory for the Logos Christology. Its supremacy indeed was not again seriously questioned.

Though Paul was deposed from his see and a successor appointed by the synod, he continued to hold office until Zenobia was conquered and Antioch taken by the Emperor Aurelian in 272. When her support was withdrawn he was finally obliged to yield to the decision of the Council of 268 which was approved by Aurelian upon the advice of the bishops of Rome and of Italy to whom the matter had been referred. Of Paul's later career we have no knowledge, though his influence continued to be felt for some time in the east as will be seen.

In the west Adoptionism was condemned in the interest of Modalism, in the east in the interest of the Logos Christology. Both in east and west Modalism in its turn succumbed to the latter. At the end of the third century

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the Logos Christology was generally accepted in all parts of the church and found a place in most of the creeds framed in that period, particularly in the east. The motive underlying it was philosophical, the hostility to it was due chiefly to either religious or ethical considerations.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

THE historic doctrine of the Trinity contains two elements, representing two independent and diverse interests: the pre-existence of the Son of God incarnate in Jesus Christ, and the full deity of this preëxistent Son of God. The former is known as the Logos Christology and by the end of the third century had overcome the two forms of Monarchianism — Modalism and Adoptionism — and was everywhere dominant both in east and west. This, however, did not mean that the deity of the Son of God was also everywhere recognized at that time. On the contrary there were many that denied it. Chief among them were Lucian of Antioch and his disciples of whom the most famous was Arius, a presbyter in the church of Alexandria.

Lucian was at the head of a theological school in Antioch where he suffered martyrdom in 311. He was a man of high standing and many of his pupils held prominent positions in the church of the east. He was a disciple of Paul of Samosata, but he departed radically from the teaching of his master, combining the adoptionism of Paul with the Logos Christology which Paul himself had zealously opposed. Like him he distinguished Christ sharply from God, but instead of counting him a mere man as Paul did, he made him the incarnation of a preëxistent being whom he called the Logos or Son of God. The Logos incarnate in Christ is not identical with the divine logos or reason which is a mere impersonal attribute or faculty, on the contrary he is a per-

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sonal being intermediate between God and man and of another nature altogether. The Logos Christology was quite out of line with the dominant interests of Paul and his school and was evidently accepted by Lucian only because it had firmly established itself by his time among the theologians of the east.

Our knowledge of Lucian is very limited, but his disciple Arius is well known particularly through the writings of his opponent Athanasius.¹ Whether Arius agreed in all respects with his teacher Lucian or went beyond him at certain points we cannot tell. But in the main he must have been at one with him for he was supported when controversy broke out by Lucian's pupils in all parts of the east. He may therefore be regarded as fairly representative of the school as a whole.

Arius was a popular and influential preacher, highly respected for his moral earnestness and ascetic principles, and he had considerable repute as a scholar. As a presbyter in the Alexandrian church he preached the doctrine of his teacher Lucian and in doing so came into conflict with his bishop, Alexander, who was a staunch upholder of the deity of Christ. The result was a bitter controversy which soon spread far beyond the boundaries of the city and agitated the churches of the east for a generation and more.

Arius was more of a rationalist than a mystic and his controlling interest was intellectual rather than religious. God, he maintained, is one both in substance and in person. His nature is indivisible and cannot be shared by any other being. He is self-existent and eternal. Everything else has been created out of nothing and had its beginning in time. The Son of God was made out of nothing to be God's agent in

¹ Summaries of Arius' teachings are given by Athanasius in his *First Oration against the Arians*, 5 ff., also in his *De synodis*, 15 ff. and his *Ad episcopos Aegypti*, 12.

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the creation of the world. He is not eternal; on the contrary he was created in time by an act of God's will. His nature is not identical with God's, any more than is the nature of other created things. God is immutable; the Son of God is subject to change. God is eternally perfect; the Son of God advances in wisdom and knowledge. The Son of God may be called the Logos, but is to be sharply distinguished from the impersonal logos or reason which God always possessed. Though Arius occasionally spoke of the Son in traditional fashion as begotten by the Father he used the term only as a synonym of created.¹ He was quite clear indeed that the Son was made out of nothing and did not partake of the divine essence in any sense. The essence of the Son is his own and is identical neither with that of God nor with that of man. The Son is the first of all creatures and belongs to a higher order of being than any others, whether angels or men. He became incarnate in Jesus Christ, being born of a virgin and taking on human flesh but not a human soul. The soul of Christ was the Logos; only his body was human. As a consequence all that he did and suffered was done and suffered by the Logos.

Because of his virtue during his earthly life and his unswerving devotion to the divine will the Son was given glory and lordship and may even be called God and be worshipped; but this does not mean that he actually is God and to confound him with God is to commit blasphemy. This makes it abundantly clear that Arius' major interest was intellectual and theological rather than religious. He was willing to let the pious Christian continue to worship Christ as God provided it was recognized that he is not really God, but only a creature. His attitude was similar to that of Paul

¹ See his epistle to Eusebius of Nicomedia, a fellow-pupil of Lucian's, in Theodoret, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, I. 4, and Eusebius' epistle to Paulinus of Tyre, in *ibid.* I. 5.

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of Samosata, but Paul was controlled chiefly by an ethical motive which Arius apparently lacked, or which was at any rate secondary with him.

In this connection it is worthy of notice that the redemptive interest which had led Ignatius, Irenæus and others to insist on the real deity of Christ was wanting in Arius. According to him the Son of God was of a different essence or substance from God. Consequently no union of divine and human natures was effected by his incarnation. Man was not deified thereby as Irenæus taught. The most that Christ could do to save men (but this was all that was needed) was to reveal the will of God and announce the divine judgment and thus lead them to repentance and obedience. In other words Arius stood in the succession of Justin Martyr and his fellow-apologists rather than in that of Ignatius and Irenæus. But though like the former he interpreted Christ's work in ethical rather than mystical terms, the ethical motive, as already said, was less dominant with him than with Paul of Samosata.

To Paul it seemed extremely important to emphasize the humanity of Christ for the sake of the inspiration and encouragement to be derived from his struggles and victory. But as the incarnation of the Logos or Son of God, as Arius viewed him, Christ was no more a man like other men than if he were the incarnation of God himself. How little Arius shared Paul of Samosata's practical attitude at this point is shown by his assertion that the Logos in becoming incarnate took on only a human body, not a human soul. Evidently the combination of the adoptionism of Paul of Samosata with the Logos Christology served neither a religious nor an ethical purpose.

To be sure Arius' insistence on Christ's growth in wisdom and knowledge may have had an ethical motive back of it, though it may have been simply a protest against his op-

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ponents' emphasis on the deity of Christ. In either event, as the incarnation of the Logos possessing only a human body not a human soul, Christ was so different from other men that his experiences could hardly be illuminating or his achievements encouraging to them. The truth is that Arius was led to take the position he did by intellectual rather than religious or ethical considerations and his strength lay not in anything positive he had to offer but in his criticism of the position of others. To undermine the influence of the mystical theology of the Alexandrians was his principal desire. But unfortunately he had little of genuine religious or moral value to put in its place and his defeat was inevitable.

As has been said the Arian controversy presupposed the Logos Christology which was questioned neither by Arius nor by his opponents. The difference between them was not that the former rejected the Logos as Paul of Samosata had done, but that he denied the deity of the Logos. The dispute had to do with the question whether the Logos or Son of God shares the nature or essence of God. In other words, the dispute had to do with the second element in the doctrine of the Trinity referred to above.

From the beginning it had been generally believed among Gentile Christians that Christ was a divine being. In him they found their Lord and to him they looked for salvation. They might count him the only God, as many of them did, or they might think of him as the Son of the supreme God, the creator and ruler of the world. In either event they were sure he was a divine being and to call him anything less was to offend their deepest instincts. This common Christian piety which expressed itself in the worship of Christ as God was supplemented and fortified by the mystical theory of redemption shared by such men as Ignatius and Irenæus. Salvation was made possible according to them only by the union of God and man in Jesus Christ. Christ must possess

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the divine nature and be able to impart it to others or the salvation of man is but a vain dream. Whether this mystical conception of salvation was widespread in the third century we do not know but there are traces of it here and there, and Athanasius, the greatest and most famous of Arius' antagonists, was a convinced exponent of it. Although only a deacon in the church of Alexandria at the time of the Nicene Council, he was later and for more than forty years bishop of the church and he devoted much of his time and attention during his long career to the overthrow of Arianism and the establishment of the Nicene doctrine. We can best understand that doctrine from a study of his writings.¹

Athanasius was not a great theologian nor was he a speculative thinker of high rank. But he had an unusually lucid and direct mind and he possessed the ability by no means common among theologians of distinguishing the essential from the unessential and going to the heart of the matter under discussion. Moreover, and this was the important thing, he had certain profound religious convictions that seemed to him threatened by Arius and his fellows, convictions that made up the very substance of Christianity as he understood it and distinguished it from all other religions the world had known. Avoiding side issues he did battle for these convictions against all opponents whether theologians, ecclesiastics, or civil rulers. He soon became the recognized head of the anti-Arian party and it was due at least in part to his clear-sightedness, his courage and his pertinacity that Arianism, seemingly so simple and reasonable, did not win the day.

To Athanasius the incarnation was fundamental. He made it the theme of one of his earliest treatises and it

¹ Of particular importance are his early tract *On the Incarnation of the Divine Word*, his *Defence of the Nicene Council (De decretis)*, his *Orations against the Arians* (the fourth is not his), and his work on the Councils of Ariminum and Seleucia (*De synodis*).

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recurs over and over again in the writings of later years. His major interest, unlike that of the great Alexandrian theologian Origen, was soteriological rather than cosmical. Not creation but salvation was to him the all-important matter. And salvation as he interpreted it demanded the incarnation. Only as God became man could a union between the divine and the human be effected and man thus be saved. The necessity of the incarnation was due to human sin. Had man not fallen he would have needed no saving and there would have been no incarnation — an opinion shared by Athanasius with most of the Fathers.

I have said that Athanasius' great concern was with salvation rather than creation. But living when he did it was impossible to reject or overlook the Logos Christology. Though its real significance was cosmical not soteriological it had so established itself in the church at large and particularly in Alexandria where the influence of Origen was still paramount that no Alexandrian theologian could think of questioning it. Athanasius' problem therefore was to combine the deity of Christ made necessary by his doctrine of salvation with the Logos Christology, a problem the counterpart of that of Lucian and his followers who undertook, as we have seen, to combine the Logos Christology with the adoptionism of Paul of Samosata. The combination of the deity of Christ with the Logos Christology had been made by others before Athanasius, including his own bishop, Alexander. Indeed it had been made already by Clement and Origen but with a motive different from that of Athanasius. The significance of the latter is that he was controlled primarily, as already said, by a soteriological interest, and that in the light of his theory of salvation he set forth the deity of the Son — a deity of essence or substance — more clearly and defended it more cogently than anyone else.

If man was to be saved it was necessary that there should

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be a union in Christ of the nature of God and the nature of man. "Nor again," Athanasius says, "would man have been deified if joined to a created being, or if the Son were not true God, nor would man have come into the Father's presence unless he who took on a body were by nature and in truth his Logos. And as we should not have been freed from sin and the curse unless the flesh which the Logos assumed were real human flesh (for there could be no community between us and something foreign) so man would not have been made God unless the Logos who became flesh were by nature from the Father and were truly and properly his. For the union was of this sort that he might unite him who was man by nature with the nature of deity and man's salvation and deification might thus be made sure. Accordingly let those who deny that the Son is from the Father by nature and belongs to his essence, deny also that he received true flesh from Mary, always a virgin. For we men should not have profited had the Logos not been true flesh any more than if he had not been truly and by nature Son of God."¹ The language of this passage with the doctrine of apotheosis or deification to which it gives expression reminds us of Irenæus.² The contrast with the other line of thought represented by Arius and his fellows is very striking.

It was not necessary according to Athanasius that Christ should be personally identical with God, that he and God should be the same individual, but it was necessary that he and God should be of one substance or essence. To be equal with God or at one with him in will and purpose was not enough. He must actually possess the very nature of God

¹ *Second Oration against the Arians*, 70.

² The Irenæan idea occurs frequently in Athanasius' writings, namely, that God was made man in order that man might be made God (cf. *De incarnatione*, 54), or in other words might become a partaker of immortality. "Thus he, the incorruptible Son of God," Athanasius says in one passage, "being conjoined with all by a like nature naturally clothed all with incorruption by the promise of the resurrection" (*De incarnatione*, 9).

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himself. Athanasius drew a sharp distinction between the nature of God and the nature of man. Anything like pantheism was abhorrent to him. Nor did he teach divine immanence and emphasize the dignity of human nature, as is often said. On the contrary, following the Platonic tradition as most of the Fathers did, he insisted that divinity and humanity are wholly alien the one to the other and completely separate.

In Jesus Christ there was incarnate not some subordinate divine being — to assume the existence of such a being, as Arius was doing, was to substitute polytheism for monotheism — in Jesus Christ there was incarnate the very nature of God himself. Though the divine nature is one and indivisible, it is shared and eternally shared by both Father and Son, and it was the Son not the Father who became incarnate in Christ.¹ So far as Athanasius was concerned there was no reason why the Father should not have become incarnate instead of the Son; he was not troubled by the philosophical scruples which beset Justin, Tertullian, Origen, and many other theologians. But before his day modalism had been discredited and the Logos Christology had been everywhere established. It was therefore inevitable that he should recognize Christ as the incarnation of the Son rather than of the Father. There is no sign indeed that he ever thought of doing otherwise. On his own principles the incarnation of the Son who was of one nature with the Father was as effective for human salvation as the incarnation of the Father could have been.

Athanasius recognized, to be sure, the subordination of the

¹ God is Father, Son and Spirit simultaneously according to Athanasius, not successively as Sabellius had maintained, and the Father, Son and Spirit are all alike eternal. In agreement with Origen Athanasius spoke of the Son as eternally generated by the Father, meaning, as Origen did, that the generation was a continuous process without beginning or end. (Cf. *First Oration against the Arians*, 14; *Third Oration*, 66.)

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Son to the Father, but the subordination was not in nature or essence. Both possess the same divine nature and both possess the whole of it, for the divine nature is indivisible. Both are equally God (ὁ θεός) and equally self-existent (αὐτόθεος).¹ But the Son is begotten of the Father and hence his sonship is secondary not primary. As God the Son is self-existent; as Son he is derived from the Father. Thus Athanasius attempted to do justice to the subordinationism involved in the Logos Christology.² His interest was not in the subordination of the Son to the Father, as it was with earlier exponents of the Logos doctrine, but in the oneness of the two. Identity of nature was fundamental and essential; distinction of hypostasis or person was of minor importance. His one great concern was the deity of Christ without which he believed human redemption impossible.

It is worth noticing in this connection that the mystery in the doctrine of the Trinity as held by Athanasius (for he recognized as theologians have always done that the doctrine is shrouded in mystery) lay not in the possession of a common divine nature by Father, Son and Spirit. This was only a form of Platonic realism. The mystery lay rather in the claim that Father, Son and Spirit each possesses the whole divine nature, and that though equally God and equally self-existent with the Father, the Son and the Spirit are subordinate to him. The former claim was due to the philosophical notion that the divine nature being infinite is indivisible,³ the latter to the philosophical Logos doctrine.

For the sake of man's salvation the eternal Son of God became incarnate in Jesus Christ, by which Athanasius meant that he was actually made man not that he merely entered into a man.⁴ In becoming man he assumed not only

¹ *Third Oration against the Arians*, I, 3, 6.

² As he conceived it the subordination was hardly more than verbal.

³ Wherever infinity is introduced there is mystery.

⁴ Cf. *Third Oration against the Arians*, 30.

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a human body, as Arius claimed, but integral human nature, soul as well as body.¹ Otherwise the deification of human nature would be partial only, not complete.² In contrast with Arius Athanasius drew a distinction between Christ's acts of glory and his acts of humility, and though he insisted that it was one person who did all that was done he inconsistently assigned the former not always but as a rule to his divine nature, the latter to his human nature,³ failing to see that the union between the two was thus made less than perfect. This defect in his doctrine Apollinarius attempted to remedy as will appear in a later chapter.

The doctrine of the Trinity, as interpreted by Athanasius, was primarily religious. It was based upon the recognition of the need of human salvation and the essence of it was the deity of Christ. It contained also a philosophical element — the Logos Christology — but this as already said was of secondary importance to Athanasius not primary. His quarrel was not with those who denied or minimized the distinction between Father and Son ; though he differed with the Sabellians he was not as a rule particularly severe upon them. His quarrel was rather with those who denied the deity of Christ, hence his lifelong and bitter controversy with Arius and his followers.

In the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity the interest in the deity of Christ, which was general among Gentile Christians from the beginning,⁴ was fully conserved and rendered immune to the philosophical criticism that had discredited Modalism and driven it from the field. Henceforth all the impulses leading Christians to exalt Christ, their Saviour

¹ This is what Athanasius meant by "the flesh" (cf. *ibid.* 53).

² Cf. *Second Oration against the Arians*, 70; *Third Oration*, 33, 35.

³ Cf. *Third Oration against the Arians*, 31-35.

⁴ The belief in the deity of Christ, as has been seen, was rooted rather in Hellenism than in Judaism, and that though Paul, its foremost defender in primitive days, was a Jew.

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and Master, to the highest possible place and to worship him as God were given free play without convicting his worshippers of obscurantism. During all the centuries since indeed it has been the boast of orthodox theologians that in the doctrine of the Trinity both religion and philosophy come to highest expression.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NICENE COUNCIL AND AFTER

IN 325 the Emperor Constantine called an ecclesiastical council to meet at Nicæa in Bithynia. In the hope of securing for his throne the support of the growing body of Christians he had shown them considerable favor and it was to his interest to have the church vigorous and united. The Arian controversy was threatening its unity and menacing its strength. He therefore undertook to put an end to the trouble. It was suggested to him, perhaps by the Spanish bishop Hosius who was influential at court, that if a synod were to meet representing the whole church both east and west it might be possible to restore harmony. Constantine himself of course neither knew nor cared anything about the matter in dispute but he was eager to bring the controversy to a close, and Hosius' advice appealed to him as sound.

The assembly duly met and was largely attended by clerics from all parts of the east, but though the Emperor did all he could to facilitate their coming only a few were present from the west. Nevertheless the council has always been known as the first œcumenical council of the church. Bishops alone were members and while both Arius and Athanasius were there (the former a presbyter and the latter a deacon in the Alexandrian church) they had no vote and took no public part in the deliberations.

Most of those in attendance probably knew very little about the questions at issue between the Arians and their

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opponents. Other matters liturgical and disciplinary also engaged the attention of the assembly and many were naturally more interested in these than in the Arian dispute. So far as the latter was concerned the council was divided into three parties.¹ There were first the convinced Arians led by Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, the capital city, who had considerable influence at court. Several of this party were pupils of Lucian of Antioch and were bound together by loyalty to him and to the theological school in which they had studied. Their number was not great but they were full of enthusiasm and confidence and expected easily to carry the synod with them. At the opposite extreme were the anti-Arians led by Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, and Hosius, bishop of Cordova in Spain. They seem to have been still fewer than the Arians but they knew exactly what they wanted and as the event proved they were very determined and politically skillful. Between them was the middle party led by the historian, Eusebius of Cæsarea. This party comprised a majority of the gathering and doubtless represented a large variety of opinion. While some of them were theologically interested, most of them probably were not and they had no common platform except the desire for peace.

Eusebius of Cæsarea was a representative man and his attitude, with which we are fortunately well acquainted, gives us the key to the situation.² He was a loyal Origenist and hence a supporter of the Logos Christology, and a foe of Sabellianism in every form. In opposition to Sabellianism which still had considerable strength in Syria and Egypt he emphasized the subordination of the Son while still insisting on his divinity. When the Arian controversy broke out Arius' position appealed to him because he too, as Eusebius

¹ On these parties see Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*⁴, vol. II. pp. 227 ff.

² See my Eusebius' *Church History*; prolegomena, pp. 13 ff.

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thought, taught the subordination of the Son without sacrificing his divinity. As a matter of fact Eusebius actually accepted what he supposed was Arianism and came to Nicæa strongly predisposed in Arius' favor. Evidently he was deceived by the Arians' use of the word begotten which seemed to suggest a community of nature between Father and Son such as Eusebius himself accepted.¹ How far it was from meaning this is shown by the following words from a letter of Eusebius of Nicomedia to Paulinus of Tyre quoted in Theodoret's Church History: "But if his being called the begotten gives any ground for the suspicion that having come into being as it were from the substance (*οὐσία*) of the Father, he also has from him identity of nature (*φύσις*), we know that not of him alone has the Scripture used the word begotten but also of others wholly unlike him in nature. For of men it says, 'I have begotten and raised up sons but they have rebelled against me' . . . For nothing is from his substance, but all things have been made by his will, each as it was made."¹

Eusebius of Cæsarea was also prejudiced in Arius' favor because, as he believed, Arius' own bishop Alexander had misrepresented his subordinate in writing against the Arians to his fellow-bishop Alexander of Byzantium. In a letter to the bishop of Alexandria, Eusebius says, "Your letter accuses them of saying that the Son was made out of nothing like all men. But they have produced their own epistle which they wrote to you, in which they give an account of their faith and expressly confess that the God of the law and of the prophets and of the New Testament before eternal ages begat an only-begotten Son, through whom also he made the ages and the universe; and that he begat him not in appearance but in truth, and subjected him to his own will, unchangeable

¹ Theodoret, *H. E.* I. 6. (I. 5 in the Eng. trans. in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*.)

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and immutable, a perfect creature of God but not as one of the creatures. If therefore the letter received from them tells the truth they wholly contradict you in that they confess that the Son of God who existed before eternal ages, and through whom the world was made, is unchangeable and a perfect creature of God, but not as one of the creatures. But your epistle accuses them of saying that the Son was made as one of the creatures. They do not say this but clearly declare the opposite.”¹

At the council an effort was made to frame a doctrinal statement which should represent the mind of the church on the matters in dispute. The Arians entered willingly into the plan and presented a creed of their own. Unfortunately no copy of it exists, but we know that it was a frank and outspoken statement of the Arian position and left no doubt as to the real belief of its authors.

Eusebius of Cæsarea was shocked by it and discovered that Arianism was not what he had thought it. The creed indeed met with little favor and was overwhelmingly rejected. Eusebius then proposed for adoption the baptismal symbol of his own church of Cæsarea, which was framed before the outbreak of the Arian controversy and was silent on the questions in dispute between the Arians and their opponents, though it affirmed both the preëxistence and the divinity of the Son of God incarnate in Christ. The symbol ran as follows: “We believe in one God, Father almighty, the maker of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Logos of God, God from God, Light from Light, Life from Life, Son only begotten, first born of every creature, before all the ages from the Father begotten, through whom also all things were made, who for our salvation became flesh and lived among men and suffered and

¹ From the acts of the seventh œcumenical council, quoted in my Eusebius' *Church History*, p. 70.

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rose again the third day and ascended to the Father, and will come again in glory to judge quick and dead. And we believe also in one Holy Spirit.”¹

It was hoped by Eusebius that this symbol might prove acceptable both to the Arians and to their opponents and might furnish a basis on which all could unite. As a matter of fact it was accepted by all parties, but the anti-Arians, while giving their approval to it, suggested certain alterations and additions. This was a shrewd move. Apparently they offered no creed of their own. Had they done so it would undoubtedly have been rejected as the Arian creed was. Rather they seem to have approved the Cæsarean symbol, thus winning the favor of Eusebius and his associates, and then proposed for the sake of greater clearness a few modifications as a consequence of which the emphasis and purport of the creed were completely changed.

The revised statement (the original Nicene Creed) ran as follows: “We believe in one God, Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only-begotten, that is from the substance of the Father,² God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father,³ through whom all things were made, both the things in heaven and the things on earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh, was made man, suffered, and rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, and cometh to judge

¹ See my Eusebius' *Church History*, p. 16; and Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, p. 131. The Cæsarean symbol can hardly have stopped abruptly with the reference to the Holy Spirit, but the remainder of it was probably omitted by Eusebius as having no bearing on the matters under discussion. The anti-Sabellian words appended in Eusebius' letter: “believing each of these to be and to exist, the Father truly Father and the Son truly Son and the Holy Spirit truly Holy Spirit,” were evidently an addition of Eusebius' own.

² ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς.

³ ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί.

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quick and dead ; and in the Holy Spirit. But those who say 'There was once when he was not,' and 'Before his generation he was not,' and 'He was made out of nothing' ; or pretend that the Son of God is of another subsistence or substance,¹ or created or alterable or mutable, the Catholic church anathematizes." ²

Among the changes are the omission of the term *Logos*, possibly on account of the ambiguity that had long attached to it, and of the words "first born of every creature, before all the ages from the Father begotten," as having an Arian sound ; the substitution of the statement "was made man" for "lived among men," with the evident purpose of strengthening the statement touching the incarnation ; and the addition of the words "true God from true God," "not made" after "begotten," "from the substance of the Father" (the crux of the whole matter according to Athanasius), and "of one substance with the Father" — all intended to place beyond equivocation the doctrine of the real deity of the Son. Finally to make assurance doubly sure the anathemas were added in which certain familiar Arian shibboleths are explicitly condemned.

The enlarged creed shut out Arianism completely. It is difficult to see how any convinced Arian could sign it in good faith, though the truth is that most of the party did subscribe, indulging not without encouragement from some of those who differed with them in the mental reservations customary in such circumstances. The few who declined to sign were deposed and exiled together with Arius and certain other like-minded presbyters.

Eusebius of Cæsarea also attached his name together with the other members of the middle party. He has consequently been widely accused of hypocrisy. To understand

¹ ἐξ ἐτέρας ὑποστάσεως ἢ οὐσίας.

² See my Eusebius, p. 17 ; and Hahn, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

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his attitude we must realize that he had become convinced during the sessions of the council that the Arians denied the real deity of the Son which he devoutly believed in. He therefore turned against them and when the time came was ready to put his hand to an anti-Arian creed. The revised creed to be sure was not altogether to his liking, for it contained clauses of a decidedly Sabellian cast. It was explained however that they did not mean all they seemed to mean but were intended simply to assert the real deity of the Son in which Eusebius himself believed. He was therefore induced to sign though he did so with some hesitation, for he realized that his course was likely to be misunderstood. In order to justify himself to his own people he wrote a long letter to the church of Cæsarea, defending his conduct in detail.

The letter begins: "What was transacted concerning ecclesiastical faith at the Great Council assembled at Nicæa you have probably learned, Beloved, from other sources, rumor being wont to precede the accurate account of what is doing. But lest in such reports the circumstances of the case have been misrepresented, we have been obliged to transmit to you, first, the formula of faith presented by ourselves; and next, the second, which the Fathers put forth with some additions to our words. Our own paper, then, which was read in the presence of our most pious Emperor, and declared to be good and unexceptionable, ran thus: [There follows the Cæsarean symbol already quoted. The letter then continues:]

"On this faith being publicly put forth by us, no room for contradiction appeared; but our most pious Emperor, before anyone else, testified that it comprised most orthodox statements. He confessed, moreover, that such were his own sentiments; and he advised all present to agree to it, and to subscribe its articles and to assent to them, with the insertion

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of the single word, 'One in substance' (ὁμοούσιος), which, moreover, he interpreted as not in the sense of the affections of bodies, nor as if the Son subsisted from the Father, in the way of division, or any severance; for that the immaterial and intellectual and incorporeal nature could not be the subject of any corporeal affection, but that it became us to conceive of such things in a divine and ineffable manner. And such were the theological remarks of our most wise and most religious Emperor; but they, with a view to the addition of 'One in substance,' drew up the following formula: [There follows the original Nicene Creed already quoted. Eusebius next discusses the differences and after justifying himself at considerable length for signing, he goes on:]

"So much, then, be said concerning the faith which was published; to which all of us assented, not without inquiry, but according to the specified senses, mentioned before the most religious Emperor himself, and justified by the fore-mentioned considerations." The letter closes with the words: "This we have been forced to transmit to you, Beloved, as making clear to you the deliberation of our inquiry and assent, and how reasonably we resisted even to the last minute, as long as we were offended at statements which differed from our own, but received without contention what no longer pained us, as soon as, on a candid examination of the sense of the words, they appeared to us to coincide with what we ourselves have professed in the faith which we have already published."¹

This apologetic and very human letter brings the situation before us with great vividness and reveals the line taken by some at any rate of the leaders of the council and advocates of the revised creed. When read as a whole it

¹ The translation is Newman's. The letter is found in Theodoret's *Church History*, I. 11, and other ancient sources, and it is reprinted entire with comments in my Eusebius' *Church History*, pp. 16 ff.

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shows clearly that they authorized a double interpretation in order to win Eusebius and his followers. But notwithstanding this ambiguity the creed affirms the true and substantial deity of the Son in explicit terms and that was all the opponents of the Arians were really interested in.

In spite of the action of the council controversy still went on. Indeed it became more general and bitter than ever and did not come to an end for half a century. Nothing else was to have been expected. A victory won by the methods employed at Nicæa, and supported by imperial pressure, was bound to produce a reaction and consolidate the opposition. Constantine tried for a time to enforce conformity but finally gave up the attempt and recalled those who had been banished. Arius himself died in 336 at an advanced age on the eve of his reception into the church of Constantinople, Athanasius having refused to readmit him to the church of Alexandria. During the latter years of Constantine's reign both Arians and orthodox were welcomed at court.

Constantine's second son Constantius, who had grown up with his brothers under Christian and as it happened Arian instruction, was a convinced follower of Arius and when he came to the throne he supported Arianism and did what he could to crush its opponents. Athanasius, the greatest and most influential of them, was exiled repeatedly and other bishops of like principles were similarly treated. When victorious however the Arians split into three factions: the extreme Arians who maintained that the Son was unlike the Father in nature or substance (*ἀνόμοιος κατὰ οὐσίαν*), being created out of nothing like all other creatures; the opposite wing, which emphasized his likeness to the Father rather than his unlikeness (their formula being *ὅμοιος κατὰ οὐσίαν* or *ὁμοιούσιος*); and a middle party supported by the Emperor, which asserted that he was "like the Father

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according to the Scriptures." This might mean more or less and was intentionally non-committal. When Constantius died and imperial support was withdrawn the middle party disappeared and there remained the extreme Arians, who denied all likeness of nature between Father and Son, and the moderate Arians, or Semi-Arians as they were called, who declared that the natures of Father and Son were alike but not identical. The Nicene party led by Athanasius now became prominent again. They emphasized their own orthodoxy and insisted, in opposition to both moderate and extreme Arians, that Father, Son and Spirit possess one and the same nature.¹

It is in the light of this division of parties that the new orthodoxy of the Cappadocian fathers (Basil, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus) is to be understood. They grew up with the Semi-Arians and were Origenistic in sympathy and strongly opposed to Sabellianism. But they also felt the influence of Athanasius and recognized the Nicene Creed, already half a century old, as authoritative. Disregarding the extreme Arians who had been rapidly losing ground and whose views were altogether alien to them, they attempted to heal the schism between the Semi-Arians and the Athanasians and bring about peace on the basis of the Nicene platform. With this end in view they undertook to interpret the creed and particularly the word *homōousios* in such a way as to make it palatable to the former without alienating Athanasius and his associates. They employed the formula "one substance in three persons"² which made it possible to emphasize equally both the oneness of nature and the distinction of persons as it had not been before. Hitherto the words *ousia* and *hypostasis* had commonly been used as synonymous. They were so

¹ See especially Athanasius, *De synodis*.

² *μία οὐσία κατὰ τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις*.

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used for instance in the Nicene Creed and no distinction between them was drawn by Athanasius. The Cappadocian fathers, on the other hand, following a usage current among the later Platonists, distinguished them sharply, taking the former to mean the common nature or substance shared by Father and Son, and the latter the individual.

Thus Basil says: "Many, not distinguishing in theology the common substance from the hypostases, fall into the same fancies and imagine that it makes no difference whether substance (*ousia*) or hypostasis be spoken of. Whence it has pleased some to admit without examination that if one substance then also one hypostasis should be affirmed. And on the other hand those who accept three hypostases think themselves compelled to confess an equal number of substances. I have therefore, that you may not fall into a similar error, written you a brief discourse concerning the matter. This then, to put it briefly, is the meaning of the words: Some nouns which are used to cover many and various objects have a more general sense like man (*ἄνθρωπος*). When we employ this word we designate the common nature (*φύσις*) not some particular man to whom the name especially belongs. For Peter is no more man than Andrew or John or James. Hence, as the word embraces all that are included under the same name, there is need of some mark of distinction by which we may recognize not man in general but Peter or John. There are other nouns which stand for a particular object and denote not the one nature but a separate thing having nothing in common, so far as its individuality goes, with others of the same kind, like Paul or Timothy. . . . Thus when two or more are taken together, such as Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, and inquiry is made concerning their substance, we do not use one word for the substance of Paul, another for that of Silvanus, and another for that of Timothy. . . . If then you transfer to

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theology the distinction you have drawn in human affairs between substance and hypostasis you will not go wrong.”¹

To the Cappadocian fathers one ousia in three hypostases meant that a common nature or substance or essence was possessed by three individual beings or persons. The distinction among these persons was as sharp as that among individual men and the oneness was like the oneness that binds all men together in the possession of a common human nature. This is a genuine doctrine of the Trinity. Compared with it the doctrine of Athanasius hardly deserves the name. According to Athanasius Father, Son and Spirit are the same being living in a threefold form, or in three relationships, as a man may be at the same time a father, a son and a brother. According to the Cappadocians, on the other hand, Father, Son and Spirit are three like or equal beings sharing in a common nature, as different men share in the common nature of man. The two doctrines are very different but both of them conserve the deity of Christ and so Athanasius was content. His emphasis was not that of the Cappadocians nor was his fundamental interest theirs. What was of primary religious importance to him was hardly more than traditional with them, but they as well as he asserted a oneness of nature or substance between Father and Son and in the circumstances more than this could not be asked.

The Cappadocians actually succeeded in winning most of the moderate Arians to the support of the Nicene Creed and

¹ Basil, Epistle 38 to his brother Gregory of Nyssa. See also Ep. 210; and Gregory of Nyssa, *On Not Three Gods*. In the west the Latin word *substantia* was originally employed to translate both *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις*. When these words acquired different meanings *substantia* was used for *οὐσία* and *persona* (the Latin word for mask or face) for *ὑπόστασις*. The Latin *persona* had the same meaning as the Greek *πρόσωπον* and hence the latter was sometimes used for *ὑπόστασις* in the east. But the formula employed by the Cappadocians (*μὴ ὁὐσία κατὰ πρὸς ὑποστάσεις*) came to be the standing formula among the theologians of the east to express the oneness and threeness of the Godhead.

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after their time Nicene orthodoxy was in general control throughout the east. It was their interpretation of the creed not that of Athanasius that prevailed there. God was commonly thought of among eastern theologians as abstract being (the philosophical $\tau\omicron\delta\ \delta\upsilon$) which is individualized in three divine persons, Father, Son and Spirit. To them prayer was offered rather than to the abstract being God. When the word God alone was used in prayer the Father was generally meant, not the triune God embracing Father, Son and Spirit. Thus in many prayers addressed simply to God or God Almighty, the Son or the Spirit is referred to in the third person, showing that the prayer was really addressed to the Father.¹

In the west, on the other hand, the Athanasian not the Cappadocian interpretation was handed down by Augustine in his classical work on the Trinity. To him as to Athanasius there was one personal God existing in three forms or relations. The formula remains the same as that of the Cappadocians, one substance in three persons, but God himself is a person, and Father, Son and Spirit are only manifestations of the one personal God. For such a doctrine of the Trinity the formula is of course less appropriate than for the Cappadocian doctrine and the result has been much confusion and misunderstanding. In spite of it the tendency toward a Modalistic or Sabellian interpretation of the Trinity has always been common in the west.

Before turning from the subject of the Trinity a few words should be said about the Holy Spirit. The Spirit played a large part in the life of the primitive church and is referred to very frequently in early Christian writings. For some time there seems to have been little or no speculation touching his nature and his relation to God and Christ.

¹ This is the case for instance in many of the prayers in the *Apostolic Constitutions* and the *Testamentum Jesu Christi*.

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When the matter came to be reflected upon, as for instance by Justin Martyr, there was serious confusion. It proved particularly difficult to distinguish the Spirit from the Son, or Logos, for many of the same functions were traditionally assigned to both. Sometimes the two were identified. Sometimes the Spirit was spoken of as the Spirit of God, again as the Spirit of Christ. Occasionally he was represented as Christ's agent or mouthpiece, but frequently the relationship was reversed and Christ was pictured as the child of the Spirit, or as endowed and equipped by the latter for his work. Opinions differed also as to the personality of the Spirit. Apparently he was usually thought of in early days as a mere divine power or influence. Often the term was employed simply to express the presence of God among his people. As time passed the tendency grew to think of him in personal terms, as the Father and Son were thought of. The association of the Spirit with God and Christ (or with Father and Son) in the baptismal formula promoted this tendency, and by the fourth century the idea of the Spirit as a separate person was practically universal. This did not mean that the impersonal use of the term, to signify the divine presence and activity, was abandoned. Indeed it has never been abandoned, with the result that the word is still beset with ambiguity.

Even after it had come to be generally taken for granted that the Spirit was a special person or hypostasis, his nature and his relation to Father and Son remained in doubt. By some he was thought of as an angel, by others as a divine being inferior only to the Father and the Son, by still others as of equal rank and of one nature with them. The baptismal formula, though it did not determine the exact relationship of the three, did make it necessary, as was increasingly recognized, to assign the Spirit a dignity if not equal to at any rate approaching theirs. It was that formula

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indeed that was ultimately responsible for the doctrine of the Trinity. Except for it the church would have contented itself with two persons in the Godhead instead of three.

No special interest in the Holy Spirit was shown at Nicæa. Attention was confined to the Son and his relation to the Father. The Arians treated the Spirit as they did the Son, recognizing him as a creature of a different order from both God and man. Some, while accepting the deity of Christ after the Nicene Council, still made the Spirit a creature. Against them books were written by Basil¹ and others, and they were condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 381 as Pneumatomachians. Thenceforth the real deity and eternal existence of the Spirit were generally taken for granted. The relationship between the Father and the Spirit was expressed by saying that the Spirit proceeded from the Father,² but what this meant there was no attempt to define.³

Our present Nicene Creed, which is not identical with the one adopted at the Council of Nicæa, was formerly supposed to be a revision of that creed framed at the Council of

¹ There is an Eng. trans. of Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto* in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd. Series, vol. VIII. Almost the whole of the work is devoted to proving the deity of the Spirit and his equality with Father and Son. The one convincing reason for the belief, as Basil implies in chap. X (24) is the association of the Spirit with the Father and the Son in the baptismal formula. That the belief was supported by religious experience there is no hint. Indeed there was so little to distinguish the Spirit from the Father and the Son, as Basil envisaged the matter, that religious experience could not well testify to the presence of the Spirit as a third distinct from the other two. Of the Spirit's functions little is said. The fullest statement is in chap. IX (22) with which may be compared XV (36) and XVI (38). Illumination and sanctification are emphasized and the perfecting of the work of Father and Son, though it is admitted that their work needs no perfecting. The book is one of the most striking illustrations of the difficulty the Fathers in general had in assigning the Spirit a place and work of his own which should justify his inclusion in the Trinity. See also Athanasius' four epistles *Ad Serapionem*, and Gregory Nazianzen's Theological Orations, no. V.

² The Greek word is *ἐκπορεύω*.

³ The Semi-Arian and other contemporary creeds quoted by Athanasius in *De synodis* all have a detailed paragraph about the Spirit, showing a greater interest than in earlier creeds.

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Constantinople in 381. It therefore bears among scholars the name of the Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed. To facilitate comparison with the earlier formula it is reproduced here in a literal translation from the original Greek text.

“We believe in one God Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, who was begotten of the Father before all the ages, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin, and was made man, and was crucified on our behalf under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and cometh again with glory to judge quick and dead, of whose kingdom there shall not be an end; and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father, who with Father and Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets; in one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. We confess one baptism for remission of sins; we expect a resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come.”

Alike as the two are it is now known that this is not a revision of the original Nicene Creed; nor was it framed at the Council of Constantinople as formerly taken for granted.¹ It was probably the baptismal symbol of the church of Jerusalem, similar to though not identical with that of Cæsarea, and was revised sometime in the fourth century by the addition of certain clauses from the original Nicene

¹ See Hort, *Two Dissertations: II: On the Constantinopolitan and other Eastern Creeds of the Fourth Century.*

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Creed. In its revised form it was apparently presented to the Council of Constantinople by Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem as the Cæsarean symbol had been presented to the Nicene Council by Eusebius, and while not officially adopted it was in some way incorporated in the records and was later supposed to have been the work of the council. The omission of the word homoöusion in connection with the Spirit and the failure to condemn the Pneumatomachians are enough to show that it did not originate there. Though it does not go as far as the council went it shows the growing interest in the Holy Spirit. Thus while the original Nicene Creed said only "I believe in the Holy Spirit," the present one says "and in the Holy Spirit, the life-giver, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets."

The creed represents more nearly the moderate position of the Cappadocians than that of Athanasius and his associates. It contains the words "begotten of the Father before all ages" which were also in the Cæsarean symbol and were excluded from the original Nicene Creed because they had an Arian sound. It omits the words "from the substance of the Father" which were the most important of all to Athanasius, and it omits also the anti-Arian anathemas.

Because it was without the anathemas and also because it was more comprehensive than the original Nicene Creed it was better fitted for general liturgical use and grew rapidly in favor. Though more moderate than the earlier creed it contained the essential thing, the deity of the Son, and conserved the result won at the Nicene Council. In the sixth century it displaced it everywhere throughout the east and soon afterward it was current also in the west, in both parts of the world under the name of the Nicene Creed which it has borne ever since.

As remarked in the previous chapter the historic doctrine

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of the Trinity contains two elements: the preëxistence and the deity of the Son of God incarnate in Jesus Christ. The primary interest of Athanasius and other convinced opponents of the Arians was in the deity of Christ. The great need of man as they believed was to be united to God and this was possible only if Christ was God as well as man. But the prevailing philosophy of the age being what it was philosophically minded theologians could maintain the deity of Christ only in the form of the deity of the preëxistent Son, that is, the prevailing philosophy of the age made the Logos doctrine indispensable. If the Stoic metaphysic had been dominant instead of the Platonic, and the immanence of God, or the oneness of divine and human nature, had been recognized by the Nicene theologians, the doctrine of the Trinity would have been unnecessary; the religious interest — to find God in Christ — could then have been conserved, as it was by the Modalists, without distinguishing the preëxistent Son of God from the Father.

The Nicene doctrine of the Trinity contains both a religious and a philosophical element, the former rooted in Christian faith, the latter the product of metaphysics. The former may maintain itself even without the latter as history has abundantly shown. It is not an accident that men have been frequently condemned for denying the deity of Christ but rarely for denying the distinction between the Father and the Son. To deny the former has generally seemed unchristian; to deny the latter only unintelligent.

CHAPTER XV

THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST

As has been seen there underlay the Nicene doctrine of the deity of Christ the realistic theory of redemption according to which man is deified by the union in Christ of divinity and humanity. The theory required that Christ possess the true nature of God, that he possess the true nature of man, and that there be a complete and perfect union between the two. At the Council of Nicæa his full deity was officially proclaimed, and after protracted controversy it was generally accepted. There remained the question : What of his humanity? How much is involved in it, and how is the union between his divine and human natures to be interpreted?

The difficulty of thinking of Christ as both divine and human had always been recognized and had led to docetism on the one side and adoptionism on the other. The acceptance of the real deity of Christ made the problem all the more insistent. It might seem credible that two finite and created natures should be combined in a single person as the Arians maintained, but to unite in one person the infinite, eternal, uncreated and unchangeable nature of God with the finite, limited and changeable nature of man was another matter altogether. Athanasius took for granted that Christ was both true God and true man and that the union between his divine and human natures was perfect and complete, but he was so engrossed in the Arian controversy that he did not realize or at any rate did not grapple with the difficulties involved in these assumptions.

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The problem was first clearly envisaged and a rational solution proposed by Apollinarius, bishop of Laodicea, a younger contemporary and friend of Athanasius, and a convinced believer both in the realistic theory of redemption and in the Nicene doctrine of the deity of Christ. That the union or fusion between the divine and the human in Christ should be perfect and complete was absolutely essential, so Apollinarius insisted. Unless it were, the deification of man was impossible. But there could be no complete and perfect union or fusion between two persons, a divine and a human, (for that matter not even between two men); at best there could be only association or fellowship. The divine Logos therefore in becoming incarnate must have taken on human nature but not a human personality. Man according to Apollinarius is composed of two elements, flesh and spirit, or as he maintained later of three elements, body, soul and spirit. The spirit or mind¹ is the active element; the flesh, including both body and soul, is passive. The former controls the latter and employs it as its instrument. In the spirit or mind resides the personality. Without it there is human nature but not a human person. Body and soul are the common property of all men and make up the stuff of human nature. The spirit is individual and separates and distinguishes each man from his fellows. By the union of a human spirit with body and soul a human person is produced. In the incarnation the Logos, a divine spirit or mind, was united with a human body and soul to form a divine-human being Jesus Christ. In the union the human was transformed by the divine so that in Christ there was only one theanthropic or divine-human nature. The active personal element in Jesus Christ was divine; the passive element, comprising the body and soul, was human. But

¹ Apollinarius spoke sometimes of πνεῦμα sometimes of νοῦς, using the two words interchangeably.

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together they constituted one complete and individual person, as a complete person is made up by the union of body, soul and spirit in an ordinary man.

Thus Apollinarius provided for the perfect union or fusion of the divine and human in Christ, and for the deification of human nature required by the realistic theory of redemption. That is, he provided for the deification of human nature if it were admitted that the spirit, or mind, is merely the personalizing element and that human nature in general as distinguished from a human person is made up only of body and soul. But it was widely felt that human nature is not complete without mind or spirit; that it is composed of body, soul and mind, all three, and that the mind needs transforming as much as the soul and body. It was widely felt in other words that Apollinarius had sacrificed the humanity of Christ and hence had left human redemption incomplete. He was therefore denounced as a docetist and Apollinarianism was condemned as a heresy at Rome and Antioch in the seventies and at the second œcumenical council at Constantinople in 381.

Those who had most to do with the condemnation of Apollinarius were the Cappadocian theologians, Basil and the two Gregories, but they had no clear and consistent theory of their own to set over against his. They were interested, as both Athanasius and Apollinarius were, in the perfect union of the divine and human natures in Christ for redemption's sake, but they insisted that human nature possessed more than body and soul and that to deny to Christ a human spirit was to make redemption incomplete. They therefore asserted that he was a complete man with a human body, soul and spirit, without succeeding in showing how this could be.

The consistent and thoroughgoing opponents of Apollinarianism were not Basil and the Gregories but the theo-

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logians of the Antiochian school, particularly Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, the latter the greatest exegete of the ancient church. Their interest was ethical rather than redemptive and they represented an altogether different point of view from that of Athanasius and Apollinarius. Like Paul of Samosata they looked upon Christ primarily as a moral example and inspiration. This he could not be, so they contended, had he not enjoyed a real moral development, meeting and overcoming temptation for himself and building up a character of his own. This meant that he possessed a genuine human personality, not merely human nature or human nature personalized by the divine Logos. Unless he was a real human person with a free will and an independent moral character he could be no proper example for his fellows. On the other hand these Antiochian theologians accepted the Logos Christology and the Nicene doctrine of the deity of Christ and hence were obliged to recognize in him another personality, infinite, eternal and unchangeable, the personality of the Son of God who was of the same nature as God the Father. There were thus, so it would seem, two persons in Christ — the divine Logos and the man Jesus — each a full and complete personality with all the qualities and faculties that go therewith. Theodore to be sure insisted that the two were so united that there was really only one person, the divine-human Christ. But the union he was thinking of was ethical rather than ontological, a oneness of will and purpose rather than of substance. Such a fusion and mingling of divine and human as the realistic theory of redemption demanded, and as Apollinarius assumed, was unqualifiedly rejected. The Logos dwelt in man but did not become man; the human was associated and united with the divine but was not deified. The one thing the Antiochians most strenuously opposed was the notion that Christ's human nature was changed

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by its union with the divine and so was less free and less subject to growth and development than that of other men.

Notwithstanding Theodore's protest that he was not dividing the person of Christ, to all intents and purposes he was doing so. Indeed it was of the very essence of his theory that there were joined in Christ two distinct natures each unchanged by the union and each possessed of all the attributes that go to constitute personality. He went so far in the matter as to insist that the divine Logos and the human Jesus lived in perfect harmony, as they did, not on account of any control or compulsion exercised by the former, but because the latter of his own free choice made the divine will his law and the fulfillment of the divine purposes his end.

The Christology of the Antiochian theologians met admirably the ethical motive that dominated them, but it was altogether unsatisfactory to those who accepted the realistic theory of redemption, for it failed to provide for the deification of human nature which that theory required. Moreover it was offensive to many because the dual personality involved seemed nothing less than a monstrosity. As a matter of fact the Antiochian theologians were widely distrusted not alone on account of their Christology but because in general they represented the scientific and rationalistic tendency of the age as distinguished from the mystical and conservative tendency of the Alexandrian school.

Controversy came to a head in the fifth century when Nestorius, a younger member of the Antiochian school, became archbishop of Constantinople (428 A.D.). He was an eloquent preacher but a narrow-minded man and a bitter heresy hunter. He attacked the Alexandrians for what he called their Apollinarianism and denounced the use of the word Theotokos (Mother of God) in speaking of the Virgin

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Mary.¹ The term had been employed by Origen and was a favorite with Athanasius and others of the Alexandrian school and was widely current even in Constantinople.² Though Nestorius was only a disciple, and reproduced substantially without change the teaching of Theodore, in the controversy with the Alexandrians in which he took a leading part his name became attached to the Christology of the Antiochian school, which has ever since been known as Nestorianism. Its essence was the possession by Christ of genuine human nature and a free human will and the consequent supreme value of his earthly life as an example and inspiration.

Cyril, archbishop of Alexandria from 412 to 444, was the leader of the Alexandrian party and took up with great eagerness and zeal the defense of the Alexandrian position, turning the tables on Nestorius and accusing him and his associates of heresy for dividing the person of Christ. In opposition to them he maintained that in the incarnation two complete natures, divine and human, the latter containing human spirit or mind as well as human body and soul, were united to form one theanthropic or divine-human nature. Christ could be said to be from two natures but not in two natures for he had only one divine-human nature, humanity and divinity in him being wholly merged. The interest here was evidently not in the free and independent development of the human Christ but in the complete fusion of divinity and humanity; in other words the interest was not ethical but redemptive. Cyril's view was in essence identical with that of Apollinarius but he avoided Apollinarianism, which had been pronounced a heresy, by asserting that the human nature of Christ possessed spirit or mind as

¹ Cf. Socrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, VII. 32.

² Even Nestorius himself was later willing to allow the use of the word if it were understood to mean no more than Mother of Christ.

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well as body and soul, thus meeting the principal objection brought against Apollinarius by his opponents. At the same time in teaching that the human nature was absorbed by the divine and that Christ therefore had only one theanthropic nature he ruled out the possibility of progress and growth on which the Antiochian school laid so much stress. His views and those of the Antiochian theologians were as far asunder as the poles. They differed not only in their Christology but in their interpretation of the meaning of Christianity. To the Antiochians it was primarily an ethical religion, to Cyril and the Alexandrians a mystical religion of redemption. To the former the example and inspiration of Christ were of fundamental importance, to the latter the absorption of human nature by the divine and thus its deification. The difference was centuries old and the Nestorian controversy was not the first to which it led nor has it been the last.

The Nestorian controversy, however, was embittered by the traditional rivalry between the bishops of Alexandria and Constantinople. The former had long enjoyed a position of preëminence in the east and resented the growing power of the latter who claimed, as the bishop of the imperial city, or New Rome, to stand higher than any of his colleagues. As a consequence the quarrel between Nestorius and Cyril, the champions respectively of the Antiochian and Alexandrian Christologies, was political as well as theological. Each of the combatants was apparently as eager to humble his rival and enhance his own authority as to establish the truth, and neither of them hesitated to use all available means to that end.

The agitation spread so widely and caused such excitement throughout the east that in 431 the Emperor Theodosius II summoned an ecclesiastical council to meet at Ephesus to consider the questions in dispute. Cyril and his supporters reached Ephesus first and without waiting for

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John, the archbishop of Antioch, and his associates, held a council of their own at which Nestorius was condemned and the Alexandrian Christology pronounced alone orthodox. When the Antiochians arrived they followed Cyril's example and in a rival council condemned him and affirmed their own beliefs. Finding a settlement impossible the Emperor approved the deposition of both Nestorius and Cyril, in the hope that with them out of the way the controversy would cease. Nestorius was later exiled and died without regaining his see, but Cyril, one of the most astute and unscrupulous politicians of the age, knew how to bring such influence to bear upon the Emperor that he was soon restored. Shortly afterward a truce was patched up, at the instance of the Emperor, between the Alexandrians and the moderate wing of the Antiochian party. Nestorius was sacrificed by the latter and a form of words (the formula of union of 433) was adopted which served to conceal the differences and put an end to serious controversy until after Cyril's death.

A few years later the quarrel broke out again and Constantinople and Alexandria were once more at war. The new outbreak was caused by the teaching of Eutyches, Archimandrite of a monastery in the neighborhood of Constantinople. Eutyches was a thoroughgoing Alexandrian in his sympathies and in spite of the truce he did not hesitate to make propaganda in the capital for the Alexandrian Christology, claiming that the formula of union, by which both parties were bound, was to be interpreted in a Cyrillian sense, though as a matter of fact it was more Antiochian than Alexandrian in its phraseology. The Constantinopolitan authorities were outraged by his course and he was speedily condemned as a heretic. Immediately the Alexandrians rallied to his support and induced the Emperor to call another synod to meet at Ephesus in 449. This

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synod, which was completely under the control of Dioscurus, successor of Cyril in the Alexandrian episcopate and an even more ambitious and politically minded prelate than Cyril himself, sustained Eutyches, anathematized the doctrine of the two natures in Christ and pronounced condemnation upon Flavian, archbishop of Constantinople, and others of his party.

The decisions of the synod were approved by the Emperor, who found Flavian's growing authority irksome and was glad of the opportunity to play off Dioscurus against him. Soon afterward however Theodosius died and his sister and successor Pulcheria with her husband Marcian reversed the imperial policy and undertook, with the support of Bishop Leo of Rome, to break the power of Dioscurus. As a rule the bishop of Rome made common cause with the bishop of Alexandria and opposed the bishop of Constantinople, whom he regarded as his chief rival. But at the present juncture the influence of Dioscurus had reached such a height as even to threaten the authority of Rome. As a consequence Leo found it expedient to change the traditional policy of the Roman see and throw his support on the side of Constantinople.

In 451 a new council met at Chalcedon, a small town in the neighborhood of Constantinople. It is recognized as the fourth œcumenical council and was actually the most largely attended of any synod of antiquity. At this council although a considerable majority of the members were Alexandrian in their sympathies, imperial and papal authority was sufficient to secure the condemnation not only of Eutyches but also of Dioscurus and his Ephesian Synod of 449, and the adoption of a mediating formula on the subject of Christology more Antiochian than Alexandrian in character. The Chalcedonian formula, which is recognized as one of the official symbols of the Catholic church both east and west, runs as follows :

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"Following the Holy Fathers we all with one consent teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in deity and perfect in humanity, God truly and man truly, of a reasonable soul and body, of one substance with the Father in his deity, and of one substance with us in his humanity, in all things like unto us without sin; begotten before the ages of the Father in his deity, in the last days for us and for our salvation born of Mary the virgin, the mother of God, in his humanity; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, acknowledged in two natures,¹ without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of the natures being by no means taken away because of the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person and one hypostasis, not divided or separated into two persons but one and the same Son and only begotten God Logos, Lord Jesus Christ; as from the beginning the prophets and the Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us concerning him, and the creed of the Fathers handed down to us."

This symbol was based in part on a letter written a couple of years before by Leo of Rome to Flavian of Constantinople,² in part on the formula of union of 433, and was carefully phrased to avoid Nestorianism (or rather what was understood to be Nestorianism) on the one side and Eutychianism on the other. Against the former the unipersonality of Christ was asserted; against the latter his possession of two natures, divine and human, each perfect and unchanged. But in spite of its careful phrasing it is evident where the

¹ The Greek text reads *ἐκ δύο φύσεων*; the Latin *in duabus naturis*. The latter is undoubtedly correct, the Greek text having been altered by some scribe to bring it into line with Cyril's teaching. See Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, p. 166.

² Leo's letter is given in the collection of his letters and also in the Acts of the Chalcedonian Council. For an Eng. trans. see *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II. vol. XIV. pp. 254 ff.

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interest lay. Though Mary is called the mother of God it is on the distinction between the two natures not on their union that the emphasis falls. There is no hint of such a fusion of the human and the divine as to bring about the deification of the former; its transformation indeed and hence its deification is distinctly rejected. Nor is there any hint of the realistic theory of redemption which was fundamental with the Alexandrians and on which all their Christology was built. The interest underlying the symbol was more ethical than redemptive — the interest of the Antiochians, of Leo, and of the western church in general.¹ To be sure the framers of the symbol were true to Nicæa in reaffirming the real deity of Christ but their interpretation of the incarnation reflected other motives than actuated Athanasius and his fellows. That the symbol preserved the humanity of Jesus was its great merit, but in doing so it failed to express the spirit of the Alexandrians which was becoming more and more controlling in the east. That spirit found expression not at Chalcedon but at the Ephesian Synod of 449, which was condemned at Chalcedon.²

The Council of Chalcedon approved the Ephesian Synod of 431 at which Nestorius was condemned and deposed, and gave it a place beside Nicæa and Constantinople as the third œcumenical council. It also treated the memory of Cyril with great respect. But in spite of its efforts at conciliation it failed to win the approval of a large part of the eastern church and it did not put an end to the controversy. Many, to be sure, yielded to the authority of the council but many others, more consistent and thoroughgoing in their support

¹ It is therefore not surprising that in his book *Nestorius and his Teaching* (1908) Bethune-Baker was able to maintain with considerable plausibility that Nestorius and for that matter the Antiochian school in general was orthodox.

² Leo called the Synod of 449 a "robber synod" (Ep. 95) and it has ever since borne that name, though it deserves it no more than Cyril's Ephesian Synod of 431 which is known as the third œcumenical council.

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of the Alexandrian doctrine of one theanthropic nature in Christ, made war upon the new symbol and did all they could to destroy its credit. These opponents of the Chalcedonian doctrine were given the name Monophysites and they made great trouble in the eastern church for a number of generations. They are known to history as heretics, but their position was substantially identical with that of Cyril and the Alexandrian church of his day. They were heretics not because they differed with him, though their opponents of course claimed that they did, for he had been pronounced orthodox at Chalcedon, but because they refused to submit to the decision of the council. Large numbers of them withdrew from the state church and formed separatist bodies of their own, particularly in Egypt and Palestine, as had already been done by the Nestorians in Syria, Persia and farther east.¹ Their attitude led more than one emperor to attempt to set aside the Chalcedonian symbol, but the influence of Rome proved too strong and the council retained at least nominal authority in spite of all opposition.

It is not necessary to follow the Christological controversies further. Personal and political considerations more and more obscured the merits of the questions in dispute. At Chalcedon itself the victory was political rather than theological and as time passed the nature of the victory became increasingly apparent. In the sixth century certain eastern theologians, including Leontius of Byzantium,² succeeded by the use of scholastic methods in interpreting the Chalcedonian formula in such a way as to make it more palatable to those of Cyrillian sympathies and their interpretation was given official sanction at the Council of Constantinople of 553 (the fifth œcumenical council) where the

¹ On these separatist churches see Adeney, *The Greek and Eastern Churches*.

² See Loofs, *Leontius von Byzanz* (1887) and Junglas, *Leontius von Byzanz* (1908).

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influence of the Emperor Justinian was dominant. But disaffection continued to increase and early in the seventh century the Emperor Heraclius, on the advice of the Constantinopolitan bishop Sergius, attempted to conciliate the Monophysites by proclaiming monothelitism or the theory that Christ had but a single theanthropic will. Heraclius actually succeeded in winning some support by this action, but in 680 at the third council of Constantinople (the sixth œcumenical council) dyothelitism — the doctrine that Christ had two wills, a divine and a human — was officially proclaimed and has remained orthodox ever since both in east and west. Dyothelitism was the natural result of the Chalcedonian doctrine of two natures in Christ and its adoption at Constantinople meant the victory of Rome as earlier at Chalcedon. By this time however the old absorption in theology had waned in the east and the victory of 680 was won largely by default. In any event it was an empty victory, for the eastern church was finding its life more and more in cultus rather than in doctrine, and those still interested in Christology were adepts in scholastic methods and were able to interpret existing formulas in such ways as to make them acceptable even to those most out of sympathy with the point of view which they originally represented.

In spite of their seeming aridity the Christological controversies, which have been recounted in this chapter, are still worthy of attention because in them two diverse conceptions of religion, the ethical and the mystical, were struggling for the mastery. As long as these were in the forefront the discussion had real vitality. When they were forgotten and details touching substance and person, nature and hypostasis, absorbed all the attention the dispute became barren in the extreme. They were often obscured and were often lost sight of by the combatants themselves, but at least until the middle of the fifth century the contrast

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between them was genuine and significant. With the Council of Chalcedon a compromise was reached which permanently clouded the issue. Thenceforth the controversy was devoid of reality not simply because politics entered into it but also and chiefly because it had to do with metaphysical subtleties which mattered not at all either religiously or ethically.

The controversy has not even the interest which today at any rate attaches so largely to psychological discussion, for in spite of appearances it had to do exclusively with ontology. The problems involved were as ontological indeed as those connected with the doctrine of the Trinity. Given a being possessed both of the infinite nature of God and the finite nature of man, how is he to be conceived? The problem is not psychological, for there are no data either of introspection or behavior to go upon. The problem is metaphysical and purely speculative. Except by those interested to trace the formation of the particular dogmas involved, the whole Trinitarian and Christological development might be dismissed as unworthy of notice were it not for the profound religious difference that underlay it and to which reference has already been made. In this difference were rooted two diverse types of religious life, one of which has chiefly, though not exclusively, characterized the east, the other the west. Because of this greater issue the controversies that have been sketched were of more significance than might appear.

It is extraordinary, it may be remarked before bringing this chapter to a close, that Christian thinking seems not to have been materially affected by the great changes which took place in the fourth century in the status of the church. Shown imperial favor on a large scale in the early part of the century, before its close Christianity became the official religion of the Empire and all other religions were pro-

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scribed. Instead however of turning their attention to the particular needs and opportunities of the new situation, theologians continued to concern themselves chiefly with matters theological and Christological — matters that had no relation whatever to the existence or well-being of the state. It would seem as if ways and means of bringing under the sway of the spirit of Christ the whole Roman world, now officially open to the church, must have engaged the attention of Christian leaders to the exclusion of everything else ; or as if the question how the church could best serve and benefit the state, of which it had become an integral part, must have absorbed the minds of many. But the writings of the period fail to bear out the assumption.

The notion that the Christian beliefs of any age are affected by the political institutions and the political thinking of the age finds little support in this critical period in the history of the church. The doctrines of the Trinity and of the person of Christ, though imperial authority more than once interfered in favor of a particular decision, do not in anyway reflect contemporary political forms and ideas. And even in ethics, where if anywhere the new conditions might have been expected to leave their mark, the old individualism continued to prevail, and the ideal that increasingly dominated the best and most devoted spirits was not to serve society and the state, but to turn one's back upon the world and seek peace with God in the seclusion of the eremitic or monastic life.

CHAPTER XVI

DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE

THOUGH they overshadow everything else the Trinitarian and Christological controversies sketched in the previous chapters did not absorb all the energies of the eastern Fathers of the fourth and immediately following centuries. Few theologians to be sure kept out of the controversies altogether but many of them were interested in other subjects as well and preached and wrote on them as occasion offered. Particularly the interpretation of the Bible engaged their attention. The Antiochian School of which Theodore of Mopsuestia, the greatest exegete of the ancient church, was a leading member was especially important in this connection, emphasizing as it did the grammatical and historical method of interpretation in opposition to the prevailing allegorical method. Some more or less important apologies for Christianity were produced during the period, as for instance by Theodoret of Cyrus, another member of the Antiochian School, and by Cyril of Alexandria, from whom we have a reply, more famous than cogent, to the Emperor Julian's work against the Christians. Devotional, practical and ascetic tracts were also written in large numbers, some of the best of them by Gregory of Nyssa, the leading theologian of the Cappadocian group.

There is nothing in all this that need detain us here. But toward the close of the fifth century there appeared a remarkable series of writings too significant and influential to be passed by. They reveal other interests altogether

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and a spirit wholly unlike that of most of the theologians of the period. Although they were produced at a time when the Christological controversy was still absorbing attention they show no trace of it but go their independent way quite undisturbed by contemporary polemics. Their author is unknown, but they purported to be the work of Dionysius the Areopagite, referred to in the Book of Acts as a convert of Paul. As such they were appealed to at a council of Constantinople in 533 by certain Monophysites and though their authenticity was at first questioned they proved immensely popular and were soon universally recognized as genuine products of the age of the Apostles. It has long been known, however, that they could not possibly have been written at so early a day and it is now generally agreed that they originated in the fifth century. They are made up of four treatises and ten letters. The treatises, all of them addressed to Dionysius' fellow-presbyter Timothy, are entitled *The Celestial Hierarchy*, *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, *Divine Names*, and *Mystical Theology*. The letters are addressed to various Christians of the first century including the apostle John. Half a dozen other works are mentioned by the writer as his own but they have altogether disappeared, if they ever existed.

The dominant theme of the extant writings is union with God. To show the importance of it and how it is to be secured was the author's chief concern. Though the writings contain considerable theology the controlling aim was not theological but religious, and the moving purpose was practical not speculative. The author was an orthodox Trinitarian and his Christology, so far as appears from the writings we have, seems to have been sound, though somewhat monophysitic in tendency, but he was not a dogmatist and his interests lay elsewhere. The contrast between his spirit and that of many another theologian of the age is

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shown by his sixth letter addressed to the presbyter Sosipater, in which he exhorts him not to attack those that differ with him but to set forth the truth and let it speak for itself.

The supreme good according to Dionysius, as the author may be called for convenience' sake, is union with God. To be a partaker of God, to share in his divine life and thus to become deified, this is man's chief end. Salvation means deification and this involves the fullest possible likeness to God and oneness with him.¹ The attainment of likeness to God and oneness with him is indeed the great aim which all should set before themselves.

The treatise on Divine Names, the longest of the four, is devoted to a consideration of the nature and attributes of God. At the same time though it is largely given up to this subject the practical aim of promoting and fostering union with God is not forgotten. In a beautiful passage in the third chapter Dionysius says that we must approach the Deity with a pure heart and with a spirit prepared for oneness with him. When we commune with him in prayer though he seems to come to us we really go to him. It is as if climbing up hand over hand by a chain let down from heaven we appeared to be drawing the sky downward instead of ourselves upward; or as if in a boat, pulling upon the cable that held it to the shore we appeared to be drawing the shore to the boat instead of the boat to the shore. "Wherefore," Dionysius concludes, "it is above all necessary, especially in theology, to begin with prayer, not in order to attract to ourselves the power which is present everywhere and nowhere, but by commemorating and calling upon God to give ourselves into his hands and become one with him."²

There are three ways of apprehending God or three paths to a knowledge of him: the linear, as Dionysius calls it, in

¹ *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, I. 3; *Celestial Hierarchy*, III. 2.

² *Divine Names*, III. 1.

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which we pass directly from observation of the external world to a knowledge of its cause or maker; the spiral, in which we reach God by dialectic or discursive reasoning; and the circular, in which turning away from all external things and abandoning the exercise of our reason we become mystically one with him and lose ourselves completely in him.¹ This according to Dionysius is the highest of all and the only complete union with God. Only in the ecstasy of mystical oneness do we really possess and enjoy him. But of this later.

In the treatise on the Divine Names God is represented in genuine Neoplatonic fashion as above all being, unapproachable and incomprehensible. We are reminded of what Clement of Alexandria says of him in the eleventh chapter of the fifth book of his *Stromateis*.² But while the attitude reflected there was exceptional with Clement, with Dionysius it was primary and controlling. The latter could not find language strong enough to express the transcendence of God — his apartness from all that is and his complete unlikeness to it. God is beyond all being and the predicates that apply to finite things do not apply to him. In agreement with Plotinus as with Clement Dionysius asserts that speaking literally we cannot say what God is but only what he is not.

The most striking expression of all this is found in the last chapter of the little treatise on *Mystical Theology*. After denying all corporeal and sensible qualities to the cause of all (that is, God) Dionysius continues: "We say that it is neither soul nor mind; that it is without imagination, opinion, reason, and intelligence; that it can neither be uttered nor conceived; that it is not number or order or greatness or littleness, or quality or inequality, or likeness or unlikeness; that it stands not nor moves nor rests; that it neither has power nor is power or light; that it neither lives

¹ *Divine Names*, IV. 8-9.

² See above, p. 203.

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nor is life, that it is not being nor eternity nor time ; that it is not perceived by the mind ; that it is neither knowledge nor truth, neither sovereignty nor wisdom, neither one nor oneness, neither divinity nor goodness ; that it is not spirit as we know it, nor sonship, nor fatherhood, nor any other of the things known to us or to anyone else ; that it is neither one of the things that are not nor one of the things that are ; that neither do existing things know it as it is nor does it know existing things as existing ; that it is devoid of reason, of name, of knowledge ; that it is neither darkness nor light ; neither error nor truth ; nor can it be in any way affirmed or denied.”¹

God is not only above all being but above all knowledge. He is as inaccessible to the understanding and reason as to the bodily senses. Only the finite can be known ; the infinite is unknowable.² We cannot conceive him or form an image or conception of him ; we cannot name or describe him, we can only praise him. In speaking of him the language of devotion must be used rather than of ordinary discourse.³

Though God is incomprehensible and inaccessible to the human reason, he has revealed himself in some measure in the Scriptures and we therefore know certain things about him which would otherwise be altogether hidden from us. The Scriptures must be our constant guide and we must neither think nor say anything about God at variance with what is there revealed.⁴ What the Scriptures tell us of him is phrased in symbolic and figurative language. We do not learn from them what God really is — that would be impossible with our finite understanding — but it is suggested to us at least in some degree what God is like, that is, not in himself but in his relations and activities. We can therefore go beyond our negations to certain positive utterances,

¹ *Mystical Theology*, V ; cf. *Divine Names*, I. i. 5 ; *Epistles*, I, V.

² *Divine Names*, I. i ff.

³ *Ibid.* V. i ff.

⁴ *Ibid.* I. i ff.

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remembering, however, that all speech about God is symbolic and can at best only point toward him, not actually describe him as he is.

Recognizing, then, the inadequacy and the figurative character of all we say we may assert that God is almighty and the source of all power, also that he is one and the ground of the unity of the world without whom everything would fall apart and perish. Because he is the being of all and binds all together in a common unity, the universe continues to exist as it otherwise could not for a moment. Above all being as he is, he is yet the source of all being, without whom nothing exists.¹ All this indeed we may learn from our observation of the external world even apart from the Scriptures. God is also above all movement and life and yet without him life and movement are impossible. He is nameless and yet bears a great variety of names. These, however, do not characterize God in himself but only his activities and the effects he produces in us or in the world.²

Though God is above all knowledge he yet knows everything and is the source of all knowledge in others. He knows himself and in knowing himself knows all.³ Also he knows all because he is the cause of all. At the same time this does not hinder the author from asserting that the will of man is free, though he does so in a half-hearted manner.⁴

God is also good and the source of all goodness, wise and the source of all wisdom, life and light and beauty, and the source of all these.⁵ Goodness and beauty are one in God and from him come all the goodness and beauty in the universe. As the sun warms the earth without trying to do so, simply because of what it is, so the goodness of God is without effort on his part and men are blessed by it, because God is what he is.⁶ Dionysius has much to say about the love

¹ *Divine Names*, VIII. ff.

⁴ Cf. *ibid.* IV. 35.

² *Ibid.* XIII.

⁵ *Ibid.* I. 6 ff.

³ *Ibid.* VII. 2.

⁶ *Ibid.* IV. 1.

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of God. God is love and all love is of God. It is from him, through him and to him. Love unites and by it all separations and divisions are overcome. Because of the divine love the unities in the world are mightier than the divisions.

But if God is good how is the existence of evil to be explained? Faced with this question Dionysius answers in good Neoplatonic fashion that evil is nothing positive; it is only a defect, the absence of good.¹ Being is good, only the lack of it is evil. Evil does not reside in matter; in fact it has no real existence anywhere and no efficient cause. It is due to weakness not power, to the want of being and of good not to the presence of anything positive. Nothing is real unless it partakes of good. In so far as good is lacking reality is lacking. All things strive toward good, even the demons, which means that all strive toward being and reality. Evil is only for the sake of good and is overruled by providence for good ends.² Although there is considerable theology and no little philosophy in all this the treatise, as has been already said, is not in its motive theological or philosophical but religious and practical.

The Scriptures, according to Dionysius, contain a revelation of God from which it is possible if not to learn what he really is in himself at least to discover something about his purposes and activities. But God also gives himself to be apprehended through various orders of heavenly beings. Dionysius insists that God has himself never appeared to anybody. In the Old Testament he is reported to have done so but this means only that he made himself known through the ministry of angels.³ There exists a vast hierarchy of spiritual beings to whom and through whom God reveals himself. Dionysius calls them the celestial hierarchy and deals with them at length in his treatise bearing that title.

¹ *Ibid.* IV. 18 ff.; 28. ² *Ibid.* IV. 31 ff. ³ *Celestial Hierarchy*, IV. 3.

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The celestial hierarchy is divided into three triads, whose names the author derives from the Old Testament and Paul: Cherubim, Seraphim and Thrones; Dominions, Powers and Authorities; Principalities, Archangels and Angels.¹ They are arranged in a descending scale, the Cherubim the highest and the Angels the lowest, though the word angel is also used at times as a common name for all of them. The highest are taught directly by God and they teach those below them, passing on the divine revelation in succession from one to another, according to the capacities of each. The mission of the celestial hierarchy is to make God known and through their ministrations we become acquainted with his perfections and are incited to imitate him. Likeness to God and oneness with him is their great aim — the great aim of every hierarchy whether in heaven or on earth.

Dionysius describes in detail the triads and their functions, indulging in many fanciful conceits and a large amount of symbolism. He finds figures everywhere in the Scriptures. They have a deeper meaning which is hidden from the eyes of the vulgar but may be discovered by the initiated. God has intentionally concealed the truth, for it is not fitting that the profane should have access to the holy mysteries. Often, Dionysius says, the images used are mean and contemptible and are wholly unlike that for which they stand, that we may not make the mistake of taking them for realities and neglect to look beyond them for the truths to which they point.²

To understand these mysteries is to know God better and enter more fully into his will and purpose. It was therefore no mere spiritual pastime Dionysius was engaged in; he believed himself to be serving an immediately practical aim. He professed modestly that he knew nothing of the deeper

¹ These triads were taken from the Neoplatonist Proclus but were renamed by Dionysius.

² *Celestial Hierarchy*, II. 1 ff.

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mysteries of which he spoke, except as he had learned them from other believers to whom angelic communications had been vouchsafed, but so far as he was able he imparted what he had received that his readers might attain a fuller knowledge of God's truth and become increasingly conformed to the divine likeness.¹

The treatise on The Celestial Hierarchy is followed by another on The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy in which Dionysius deals particularly with the Christian means of grace. Christ came to bring fallen humanity back into oneness with God. Only Christians can attain that oneness and they can attain it only as they make use of the means provided therefor. These means are set forth in detail in the treatise just referred to. The celestial hierarchy has its counterpart on earth in an ecclesiastical hierarchy which includes not merely the clergy, as its name suggests, but also the sacraments, that is, sacred things as well as sacred persons. As we are flesh and blood as well as spirit the spiritual communications that suffice for angelic beings are not enough for us. We need sensible signs and symbols — visible and tangible means of grace — if we are to be raised above the things of earth and share in the divine life. There are three stages in the soul's ascent to God or in its progress toward union with him — purification, illumination and perfection — each of which is connected symbolically with a particular sacrament and a particular order of the ministry.²

Dionysius' interest was not ecclesiastical — he has nothing to say about the church — nor was it sacerdotal. He was concerned only with the means appointed by God to bring

¹ *Ibid.* VI. 1.

² The author was so eager to preserve the parallelism between the heavenly and earthly hierarchies that he even carried over the three stages of purification, illumination and perfection to the former, interpreting purification in this case in an intellectual rather than an ethical sense. (See *Eccles. Hierarchy*, VI. 3 : 6). The number three which runs through both the treatises on the hierarchy was a favorite with Plato and the Neoplatonists.

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men into oneness with himself, whether sacred things or sacred persons. It is significant indeed that the work on *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* begins with the sacraments rather than the clergy and devotes three chapters to the former and only one to the latter. To assume therefore, as is sometimes done, that Dionysius' principal aim in this treatise was to exalt and glorify the clergy is wholly to misunderstand him.

The visible means of grace dealt with are baptism, the eucharist and the chrism. The first step toward God is love for him. Love for God leads to the desire to be like him and to become one with him, and he who has this desire goes to a baptized Christian, one already initiated into the holy mysteries, and asks to be taken to the hierarch or bishop, promising to obey all that is commanded and begging him to assume the oversight of his life. Owing to the gravity of the affair the applicant is not received at once but after some delay his wish is granted and he is given Christian baptism. There follows a long description of the baptismal rite. It is represented as a very solemn thing, hedged about with safeguards and accompanied with an elaborate ceremonial designed to impress the onlookers and the candidate himself with the great issues involved and the serious commitments made. The symbolism of the several parts of the service is pointed out and everything possible is done to give spiritual meaning to the sensible signs and sacred acts. Baptism symbolizes purification, the first stage in the soul's ascent to God. By it the candidate, mystically speaking, dies with Christ unto sin, is renewed and strengthened by union with the Holy Spirit, and is initiated into the Christian mysteries and thus prepared for the enlightenment to follow.

After being baptized the initiate is invited to partake of the eucharist, to a detailed description and interpretation of which the author devotes considerable space. The eucha-

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rist is connected with the second stage in the soul's ascent to God, the stage of illumination. In it the participant comes into intimate union with God through the incarnate Christ whose body and blood are symbolized in the elements. It is therefore the holiest of all sacred rites.

The interpretation of the eucharist is followed by a section on the consecration of the chrism or holy oil. This symbolizes perfection, the third stage in the soul's ascent to God. The artificiality of the threefold division which runs through the whole work is seen most clearly at this point. The chrism is brought into connection with the perfection of the Christian and is thus given the supreme place among the means of grace, although, according to Dionysius himself, this place really belongs to the eucharist, the holiest of all. He attempts somewhat lamely to justify the position assigned to the chrism by a reference to its use in other sacred rites and to its symbolic representation of Christ the anointed one.

After dealing with the sacraments the author devotes a chapter to the clergy whose function it is to mediate the divine to those that are worthy according to their worthiness.¹ He speaks of three orders of the clergy — the bishop, whom he invariably calls Hierarch (*ἱεραρχός*), an unusual name for him, the presbyter, whom he calls Priest (*ἱερεὺς*) and the deacon, to whom he gives the singular title Liturge (*λαειτουργός*). The use of these uncommon titles instead of the ordinary ones was characteristic. Throughout his writings the author seems to have striven to enhance the impression of mystery by employing unfamiliar terms and forms of expression. It should be said, however, that the titles chosen were consistent with his general interest and point of view and brought out that aspect of their functions which he was alone concerned to emphasize.

¹ *Eccles. Hierarchy*, V. 4.

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As Jesus is the head of the entire hierarchy so the bishop is the head of each particular or local hierarchy. He alone ordains the clergy; he alone consecrates the sacred oil which is used in baptism as well as in other ceremonies; in fact all the holy rites, even those performed by the priests, depend on him and without him would have no efficacy.¹ The particular functions of the several orders correspond with the three stages in the progress of the Christian — purification, illumination and perfection. To the deacons belongs the first, to the priests the second, to the bishops the third.

Because they are the ministers of holy things the clergy must be pure and holy men, otherwise their ministrations have no value.² They must be called of God to their task and must be solemnly consecrated and set apart for it. The author's ideal of the clergy is high; he demands of them not only the loftiest moral and religious character but also a special endowment from above. This is conferred at ordination, and to the description of the service of ordination, which he calls a mystery like baptism and the eucharist, and to the symbolic interpretation of the service he devotes the greater part of the chapter. Here as elsewhere his love of symbolism is abundantly evident.

Dionysius turns next to the people, dividing them like the clergy into three groups: catechumens, baptized laymen, and monks. These too represent respectively the three stages in the Christian life — purification, illumination and perfection. The monks are the highest of the three groups and the author deals with them at length, indulging in symbolism on a large scale as in other parts of the treatise. Though the monks are not clergymen they are consecrated or set apart as the clergy are but by a simpler ceremony. They differ from the clergy not in the worthiness of their calling but in that they live for themselves alone instead of leading

¹ *Eccles. Hierarchy*, V. 5.

² *Ibid.* III. 3 : 10 ff.

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others as the clergy do. That Dionysius thinks the worse of them on this account there is no hint. Their life is higher and holier than that of the common people and many things are forbidden to them that are permitted to others. They pledge themselves to live a perfect life, free not only from all fleshly lust but also from all thoughts and deeds that can distract their attention in the slightest degree from the one aim of union with God and growing likeness to him.

The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy closes with a long chapter on the burial of the dead. This too is treated as a mystery from which the unbaptized are to be excluded as from the other mysteries, for it harms the uninitiated rather than helps them to witness holy rites. The chapter includes an extended passage on immortality and defends the resurrection of the body but rejects all crass and materialistic notions of the future life. It is the spirit of the great Alexandrians, Clement and Origen, not of the church at large, that speaks here as in many other places.

In the work on The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy we have one of the very best examples of the idea of the cultus as a means of experiencing God and becoming united to him. Though transcendent and inaccessible God gives himself to be apprehended and enjoyed in sacraments and mysteries. Under the spell of a stately ceremonial — processions, prayers, hymns and other accessories, all of which Dionysius emphasizes — the Christian enjoys a profound emotional experience which he traces to the presence of the divine and which he interprets as his own communion with Deity. Of all this the treatise on The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy is an admirable exponent.

Partly under the inspiration of the Pseudo-Dionysian writings, still more as a result of the common mystical tendency of which they were one of the most striking products, the mystical interpretation of the cultus ultimately

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became general in the eastern church. In the west there was also something of this, but there the sacraments, and the cultus as a whole, were chiefly thought of as means of gaining divine forgiveness and becoming reconciled with God, the ethical rather than the mystical aspect being prominent. The Pseudo-Dionysian writings had large influence in the west as well as in the east, but in the west, as we shall see, their influence was felt chiefly at other points.

In his little work on Mystical Theology, the shortest and it may well be the latest of the four treatises, Dionysius reaches the summit of his thought in genuine and thoroughgoing mysticism. In this tract he sets forth in emphatic language, language that has become classic in the literature of mysticism, what he regards as the highest kind of union with God. Addressing his fellow-presbyter Timothy he exhorts him to free himself from all entanglements, and following the *via negativa* which means the repudiation of all the affirmations of the reason and the abandonment of all definite ideas, to lose himself in God in the ecstasy of mystical oneness with him. For ordinary Christians the author evidently thinks that oneness with God attained through the sacraments and other symbolic ceremonies is enough and that no more can be expected of them. But for Timothy and others like him a higher blessedness is possible, to be attained not by the use of sacred rites or by the assistance of sacred persons (neither the sacraments nor the clergy are mentioned in this treatise), but by the way of genuine mysticism. "Do thou, dear Timothy, in thy eager striving after mystical visions abandon both sense-perception and mental activity, all things sensible and intellectual, all being and not being, and as far as is possible mount up without knowledge into union with the One who is above all being and knowledge; for by freeing thyself completely and unconditionally from thyself and from all things, thou shalt come to the superessential brightness of the

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divine darkness, if thou turnest thy back on everything and art loosed from everything. But take care that this come not to the ears of the uninitiated, who being entangled in existing things imagine that there is nothing superessential above the things that are and suppose that they can grasp with their understandings the One who has made the darkness his hiding place.”¹ With this may be compared the following passage from one of Dionysius’ epistles: “If anyone seeing God understands what he has seen, he has not seen him but some one of his creatures that are and are known. But God himself, raised above mind and being, in that he is wholly unknown and is not, both exists in a superessential manner and is known in a supermental way.”²

The extreme mysticism of the tract on Mystical Theology, prepared for already in the treatise on Divine Names, was not wholly new in the eastern church. Traces of the same kind of thing are found in Clement of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa³ and some others, but by none of them was it carried as far as by Dionysius who in this matter was completely at one with the great Neoplatonist, Plotinus. If we would reach God, Plotinus insisted as Dionysius did after him, we must rise above knowledge into ecstasy. Then though we do not understand God we may be said most truly to enjoy him. It is worth noticing in this connection that like Plotinus Dionysius seems to have thought of mystical and ecstatic union with God as a rare thing, open only to certain choice spirits and to them only occasionally and as the result of severe discipline.

It is commonly taken for granted that our author was a Neoplatonist before he became a Christian and brought his Neoplatonism over into the church with him. Whether this

¹ *Mystical Theology*, I. 1-2; cf. also chap. II.

² Epistle I. addressed to Caius; cf. also Ep. V. addressed to Dorotheus.

³ Particularly in his striking little tract the *Vita Moysis*.

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be true or not at any rate he felt its influence at several points, particularly though not exclusively as represented by his older contemporary Proclus. Not only his mysticism, with its three stages of approach to the divine, but also his idea of God, his theory of the nature of evil, and his symbolism, in principle if not in form, all had their antecedents in that system and were unquestionably derived in part at least if not wholly therefrom.

The influence of the Pseudo-Dionysian writings was enormous. It was due to them in no small part that the eastern church of the Middle Ages was a genuine mystery-cult not only in fact but in theory as well. In them were set out more clearly than in any other Christian documents of the ancient church the principles that constitute a true mystery-religion: a sacred ritual with secret and symbolic rites which are open only to the initiated, and through which a knowledge of divine things is imparted and a man enters into union with the divine, is made a partaker of immortality, and becomes progressively deified. This too was not new in the eastern church. From the earliest days, as has been already seen, Christianity at any rate in its Pauline form bore the aspect of a mystery-religion and owed its spread in no small part to that fact. But Dionysius carried the matter further than anyone before him and gave classic expression to this interpretation of the Christian religion.

And still more, thoroughgoing mysticism of the Neoplatonic type was widely fostered and was given an increasing currency by the reading of his works. Their credit and authority were the greater because it was believed that their author belonged to the apostolic age. That they were brief and contained only a few closely related and exceedingly seductive ideas which were iterated and reiterated with the utmost persistence also had much to do with their vogue. Nor was their reputation confined to the east. Already

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before the end of the sixth century they were referred to by Gregory the Great and in the ninth century they were translated into Latin by Scotus Eriugena. From his time on they were widely popular. Large use was made of them by several of the schoolmen. Hugo of St. Victor wrote a commentary on them and Thomas Aquinas esteemed them highly. Even Dante was indebted to them. Their influence was especially great in the realm of mysticism. Indeed it would hardly be too much to say that they were the fountain head of most of the mysticism in the western church of the Middle Ages.

CHAPTER XVII

JOHN OF DAMASCUS AND THE EASTERN CHURCH OF THE MIDDLE AGES

WITH the third Council of Constantinople which met in 680 the dogmatic development in the eastern church came to a close, except for the dogma of image-worship enunciated in 787 at the second Council of Nicæa, the seventh œcumenical council. In the first half of the eighth century the development was summed up by John of Damascus, the last of the outstanding theologians of the eastern church and the first great scholastic. With him the productive period in theology may be said to have closed so far as the east was concerned. John himself as a matter of fact did not contribute to the development in any significant way. He was a systematizer rather than a creative thinker and he added nothing important of his own. But he summed up all that had gone before and set it out in clear and orderly fashion, thus supplying the Greek communion with an orthodox system of theology which has remained normative ever since.

John came of a prominent Christian family of Damascus and after his father's death held political office there under the Caliph, an office hereditary in his family. After a time however for reasons unknown he abandoned his public career and retired to the monastery of St. Sabas near Jerusalem, where he spent the remainder of his life. While there he was ordained a presbyter in the church of Jerusalem, but he continued to live in the monastery and devoted himself

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chiefly to studying and writing. He was a great scholar, perhaps the greatest of his age. He was also a voluminous writer and his extant works, including many of doubtful authenticity, cover a wide range of subjects.

He first attracted general notice by his spirited defense of image-worship in opposition to the iconoclastic policy of Emperor Leo the Isaurian. In three successive treatises he set forth in vigorous fashion the familiar arguments for the use of images¹ in churches: that they aid devotion; that they make Christ and the saints more real; that there is the same reason for them as for other sensible signs of spiritual realities; that the prohibition against images in the decalogue has no application since Christ came in the flesh and thus made God visible; that the worship afforded visible things is not the highest form of worship, which is reserved for God alone, but a lower form which amounts to no more than homage or reverence; that it is proper thus to honour every sacred object, pictures of Christ and the saints as well as the eucharistic elements, the cross, the altar and other things of the kind; that it is not the visible object that is really honoured but the one represented by it; and finally that to refrain from venerating things because they are material is to treat matter as evil and thus to fall into the heresy of the Manichæans. John also argued earnestly and boldly for the freedom of the church which he claimed was threatened by the Emperor's effort to force his will upon it and to dictate its policy in spiritual affairs.² As was his custom in most of his works he appealed both to the Scriptures and to the Fathers in support of his position. Among the latter he cited Dionysius the Areopagite first of all, referring to him in high terms as holy and divine and an expert in the things of God.

¹ In the east these were chiefly pictures and bas-reliefs.

² This was widely regarded as the crux of the matter.

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In addition to the treatises on the worship of images John's writings include an extended philosophical and theological work entitled *The Fount of Knowledge*; a large thesaurus of passages from Scripture and the Fathers bearing chiefly on ethical topics and known as the *Sacra parallela*; Christological essays defending the orthodox position against Nestorians, Monophysites and Monothelites; an apology for Christianity against Mohammedanism in the form of a dialogue between a Saracen and a Christian; commentaries, homilies, ascetic tracts, liturgical canons, and hymns. He was much interested in ecclesiastical music and was a famous composer and hymn-writer. Some of his productions are still used in the services of the Greek church, notably at Christmas and Easter.

His most important work and the only one that need engage our attention here is his *Fount of Knowledge*, divided into three parts, the first containing philosophical prolegomena, the second a history of heresy, and the third a summary of the orthodox faith. The first part is entitled *Philosophical Topics* and is commonly referred to as *Dialectica*. It opens with the words "Nothing is more excellent than knowledge," and the third chapter contains six definitions of philosophy. "Philosophy is the knowledge of things as they are, that is, of the nature of things"; "the knowledge of divine and human affairs, that is, the visible and invisible"; "meditation on death"; "imitation of God"; "the art of arts and science of sciences"; "the love of wisdom." Philosophy is divided, John says, into speculative and practical; speculative philosophy into theology, physiology and mathematics, and practical philosophy into ethics, economics (or domestic economy), and politics. There follows a definition of each of these, and the body of the book is devoted to a detailed discussion of a variety of philosophical conceptions: being, substance, accident,

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genus, species, the individual, identity and difference, form, quantity, quality, time, simultaneity, succession, propositions, syllogisms, and the like. As was natural John was particularly interested in theological and Christological terms, but his discussion is by no means confined to them. In fact it covers a wide range of topics and fulfills capitably the purpose of a philosophical introduction to Christian theology as it was understood in his day. The philosophical presuppositions are in the main Aristotelian, supplemented and modified here and there by Neoplatonic ideas.¹

The second part of the *Fount of Knowledge* deals with heresies, and is little more than an abridgment of Epiphanius' work against heresies with additions from Theodoret and others, supplemented by a few contributions from the pen of the author himself. These last have to do with errors originating since the time of Epiphanius and Theodoret, particularly Mohammedanism which is discussed at considerable length.

The third part of the *Fount of Knowledge* is entitled *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* and contains a systematic presentation of the theology of the eastern church. It was not intended to set forth the results of John's own independent thinking but only the truths taught by the Bible and the Fathers. The three Cappadocians, particularly Gregory Nazianzen, are followed most closely, and in certain parts of the work Dionysius the Areopagite. Use is made also of many other Fathers of the fourth and following centuries, among them Athanasius, Chrysostom, Nemesius of Emesa, Cyril of Alexandria and Leontius of Byzantium. Origen, in accordance with the general opinion of his day, John regarded as a heretic and referred to him only to condemn him.

¹ Aristotelianism had already influenced eastern theologians to some extent, but it owed chiefly to John of Damascus the large place which it had in the theology of the east from his time on.

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In the strict sense the eastern church of John's age had only two dogmas: the Trinity, promulgated at the Council of Nicæa, and the Person of Christ, formulated at the Council of Chalcedon and later synods. But there was a large circle of beliefs which made up the orthodox faith and were also counted as authoritative. The Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed, the great symbol of the eastern church, in addition to the doctrine of the Trinity contains the incarnation of the Son of God for our salvation, the virgin birth, the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ and his return for judgment, the Holy Catholic church, baptism for the remission of sins, the resurrection of the dead and life everlasting. All these constituted a part of the church's faith and were esteemed as irrefragable and as binding on the conscience of Christians as the dogmas of the Trinity and the Person of Christ. Beyond these there were still other doctrines generally recognized as orthodox. With them as well as with the dogmas of the church in the narrower sense John dealt in his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*.

It is interesting to compare John's work¹ with Origen's *De principiis*, the first system of theology. While the *De principiis* was an attempt not merely to state the common faith of the church but also to discover the deeper truths involved in or to be deduced from it, the *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* was only a summary of what was already believed. Origen's work was original and creative in no mean degree; John's was quite without new ideas. The latter was more nearly akin to Theodoret's *Epitome of Divine Dogmas*, the fifth and last book of his treatise against heresy in which he supplemented his polemic with a statement of the true Christian faith, to show what ought to be

¹ That is, his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Though it is only the third part of the *Fount of Knowledge*, it often circulated separately, and for convenience sake I refer to it as if it were an independent work.

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believed in contrast with the false teachings of the heretics. John followed Theodoret somewhat closely but his method was different and his work covered many subjects omitted by the earlier theologian. In fact it was constructed on a larger scale and included the results of the dogmatic development since Theodoret's day especially in Christology.

In spite of its lack of originality the value of John's work was very great. It served an important purpose and was excellently adapted to the existing situation. The author had a marked capacity for systematic thinking and his gift of clear and concise statement was considerable. To be sure the work was not without its repetitions, irrelevancies and obscurities, but on the whole it fulfilled its aim admirably and its reputation was so great that it was never superseded in the eastern church.

The work was divided by John into a hundred chapters; the division into four books, which is followed in all our editions, dates from a later time. The first book, containing fourteen chapters, deals with God. Here John follows Gregory Nazianzen and Dionysius the Areopagite most closely. In agreement with them God is represented as incomprehensible and ineffable and above all being. Not that he does not exist but that he is more than all existing things and even existence itself.¹ Knowledge has to do with what is and if God is above all being he must also be above all knowledge. We can assert what he is not but not what he is.

Nevertheless, though God is above human comprehension, he has not left us in complete ignorance of himself. He has implanted in all men the conviction that he exists. Moreover, the creation of the world and its preservation and government show his power and majesty, and through the law and the prophets and through Jesus Christ he has told

¹ Bk. I. chap. 4.

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us all that it was possible or profitable to acquaint us with. Beyond this we must not go. On the contrary we must be content with what has been revealed and be careful not to overstep tradition.¹

Notwithstanding all John has to say about the incomprehensibility of God there are really many things we know about him. We know, for instance, that he is eternal, uncreated, unchangeable, uncompounded, incorporeal, invisible, impalpable, infinite, without limits; the creator of all things; almighty, all-controlling, all-seeing; just and good; sovereign and judge. We know too that he is one, that is of one substance (*ousia*), and that he subsists in three hypostases: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But what his substance is and how it exists as it does we do not know. Like Gregory of Nyssa and the other Cappadocian Fathers, John thought of abstract being existing in three individuals or persons, rather than of one personal being existing in three relations.²

Though the knowledge of God's existence is inborn, Satan has led many to deny it. John therefore repeats the common theistic proofs from a changeable world to an unchanging creator and from an ordered world to an intelligent designer — proofs that had been used by Christian theologians from the beginning. Similarly the familiar arguments are employed to show that God is one not many.³ There follow chapters on the Logos, on the Holy Spirit, and on the Trinity, in which the traditional positions are set forth clearly and explicitly without addition or subtraction.⁴ These chapters constitute an admirably clear and succinct account of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity. They are

¹ Bk. I. chap. 1. Cf. also Bk. IV. chap. 11 where John condemns in unsparing terms carnal curiosity or the desire to know more than has been revealed. This attitude appears over and over again in Christian history, one of many expressions of the age-old dread of infringing on the prerogatives of the gods.

² See above, p. 269.

³ Bk. I. chap. 5.

⁴ Bk. I. chaps. 6-8.

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supplemented by a discussion of the names of God and the anthropomorphisms of Scripture, which is entirely in the spirit of Dionysius and in which he is referred to and quoted more than once.

The second book, containing more than thirty chapters, deals with the creation. God in his goodness not being content to contemplate himself brought other beings into existence that they might enjoy his benefits. He created everything by thinking of it, the Logos carrying out his thought and the Spirit perfecting it.¹ The account of the creation begins, as was customary, with the angels, who are intelligent, incorporeal beings, endowed with free will and able either to remain good as they were created or to choose evil. However, if they choose evil they are without the power to repent which belongs only to corporeal beings, for man's repentance is due to the weakness of his body. A little later John says that repentance is impossible to the fallen angels because their fall is final, just as death is final for men. Though incorporeal, angels can be and act only in one place at a time, but they are in perpetual motion and are so swift that wherever the divine glance bids them go they are immediately there. They are immortal not by nature but by grace, for everything that has a beginning comes to an end unless preserved by God. God alone is eternal, for he who created time is not subject to time but above it. Angels are the guardians of nations and regions of the earth over which they are set by God, and they govern all human affairs and bring men help as it may be needed. Their duty is to sing God's praise and carry out his will.

The prince of this world, to whom God committed the care of it, was created good and for a good purpose, but with a host of angels who were subject to him he rebelled against his creator. From him and his followers all evil comes, but

¹ Bk. II. chap. 2.

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men are able to withstand them and resist temptation if they will. In agreement with the Areopagite and the Neoplatonists, John says that evil is nothing else than the absence of good, as darkness is only the absence of light.¹ Though he repeated the statement later in his work he did not make earnest with the notion or draw the consequences that naturally follow from it. As a matter of fact the metaphysic on which it was based was not his and the idea itself was out of line with his general attitude. As a rule he spoke of evil not as the mere absence of good but as something very positive, and he followed the common Christian tradition in viewing death as a punishment inflicted on man for his sin rather than a natural consequence of the loss of good and hence of being.

After dealing with the angels, good and bad, John turns to the visible creation. In this part of his work he follows Aristotle and Ptolemy and particularly the Cappadocian Basil, whose *Hexæmeron*, treating of the early chapters of Genesis, was a standard work among Christians both in east and west. God made the visible universe out of nothing, part of it directly, such as heaven, earth, air, fire, and water, part of it indirectly, as for instance living creatures who are composed of already created substances.²

The chapters on the visible creation contain summaries of current ideas on astronomy, physics, geology and geography, which show that the orthodox faith was supposed to include much more than mere theology, though to be sure alternative views are sanctioned in more than one instance, and it was evidently not intended to make a particular scientific opinion obligatory on Christians except in so far as it might be supported by Scripture. Even these scientific subjects were made to serve a religious end. The lesson is drawn, for instance, from the relation of the sun and moon that men

¹ Bk. II. chap. 4.

² Bk. II. chap. 5.

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should live in an ordered society and should not question the authority of the rulers set over them by God. Eclipses show the changeableness of all created things and the folly of those who worship the creature instead of the creator. Astrology is rejected because it substitutes fate for free will and thus makes God unjust when he gives good things to some and evil things to others.

A considerable part of the second book is devoted to man. Here John followed Aristotle closely, deviating from him only when his views were out of agreement with Christian tradition. Man is a microcosm, connected through his body with the whole visible creation, animate and inanimate, and through his reason with the invisible world of incorporeal and intelligent beings.¹ He is composed of body and soul, the two being created simultaneously. In this connection John rejected with scorn Origen's doctrine of the preëxistence of souls. Though created at the same time with the body the soul, according to John, is wholly independent of it and makes such use of it as it will, for all the powers of the body are under its control. Pleasure, pain, fear, anger, imagination, sensation, thought, memory are discussed at some length. The organ of imagination is placed in the front of the brain, the organ of thought in the middle, and the organ of memory at the back.²

The freedom of the will is asserted, freedom being inseparable from rationality. That the will is free is proved by the fact that men deliberate before acting, and to pronounce the fairest and most precious of man's endowments superfluous is the height of absurdity.³ The book closes with a discussion of providence and predestination and their relation to free will. All things are foreknown but not predetermined by God. He does not cause evil; nevertheless he permits it and overrules it for good. He is the source and

¹ Bk. II. chap. 12.

² Bk. II. chaps. 17, 19, 20.

³ Bk. II. chap. 25.

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cause of all good and without his coöperation we can neither will nor do any good thing, but it is in our power to remain virtuous, as we were created, or to depart from God and fall into wickedness. John's discussion is brief and superficial. Free will is asserted in unequivocal terms, but the problems involved in it, particularly the difficulties inherent in any attempt to reconcile it with divine predestination are not appreciated and are dismissed in a few sentences. Evidently while free will was very important to John, as to the Greek Fathers in general, he did not take divine predestination seriously.

The third book and the first eight chapters of the fourth are devoted to the person and work of Christ, particularly his person, which is dealt with much more carefully and at much greater length than his work. Man, having yielded to the temptation of Satan, was banished from Paradise, condemned to death and made subject to corruption. God, however, did not desert him. On the contrary he had compassion on him and by various means strove to release him from the control of sin, above all by the incarnation of his only-begotten Son, the divine Logos. The incarnation showed both the goodness and the justice of God, his goodness in having compassion on man and his justice in that Satan was overcome not by some alien power but by man himself in the person of Jesus Christ.

Being perfect God the Logos became perfect man and thus Christ had two complete natures, divine and human, neither being absorbed by the other and neither being altered by the union. The result was not one composite nature but two simple natures, divine and human, united in the one person Jesus Christ. To the elucidation and defense of the doctrine of one person in two natures John devotes several chapters.¹ Christ had not only two natures — divine and

¹ Bk. III. chaps. 3 ff.

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human — but also two wills and energies, will and energy belonging to nature rather than to person.¹ It is Christ who wills, that is, the willing is done by the one composite person Jesus Christ, but in willing he employs either the divine or the human will, or both of them, the two being always perfectly in harmony one with the other.² John laid great emphasis on this doctrine of two wills in Christ — the doctrine officially promulgated at the sixth œcumenical council of 680 — and expounded and defended it at considerable length in opposition to the Monothelites who were evidently still formidable. On the whole these Christological chapters (chapters 3 to 19) constitute one of the clearest and best summaries of the orthodox Christology that we have. At the same time John did not succeed in doing away with the ambiguities and resolving the contradictions involved in that Christology any more than those who preceded him.

The account of the orthodox Christology is followed by several chapters on Christ's human nature as exhibited in his earthly career.³ In these chapters John endeavors, on the one hand, in opposition to the Monophysites, to show that Jesus Christ was a real man possessed of complete human nature with all its passions and limitations, including weakness and fear and ignorance, on the other hand, in opposition to the Nestorians, to show that the union between the divine and human in Christ was perfect and that because of it he was superior to the limitations of humanity : that he was sinless, sin being due not to man's natural desires but wholly to the temptation of the devil who was unable to prevail over the Lord, that he was without fear, except the natural physical shrinking from death, that he knew all things and was in possession of miraculous power, and that he was complete in wisdom and grace from the beginning, so that his apparent growth in them, spoken of in Scripture, meant

¹ Bk. III. chaps. 13 ff. ² Bk. III. chaps. 14, 15. ³ Bk. III. chaps. 20–24.

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only their increasing manifestation. Moreover, his praying recorded in the gospels was not because of any need of his own but only that he might set us an example.

These chapters, unlike the preceding, are lame and halting and reveal the increasing difficulties in which the orthodox Christology was involved when it was applied to the actual life of Jesus, in other words when it was brought down from the abstract to the concrete, from the realm of metaphysics to that of psychology. As a matter of fact, as was seen in a previous chapter, the orthodox Christology was built not on the life of the historic figure Jesus Christ, as reflected in the gospels, but on a theory of redemption framed in large part independently of him and translated into the terms of the prevailing philosophy of the age. To bring it into harmony with the life of Jesus was naturally difficult as John's treatment abundantly shows.

John's controlling interest, like that of most of the eastern Fathers for some centuries before his time, was Christological rather than soteriological. The greater part of the third book and several chapters of the fourth were devoted to the person of Christ and even in his philosophical prolegomena he had something to say upon the subject. In comparison he concerned himself little with Christ's saving work. After referring to the incarnation very briefly at the beginning of the third book — where the method of it seems to interest him more than the fact itself — he entered upon a protracted discussion of the person and natures of Christ and only at the end of the book spoke of him in passing as having offered himself to the Father as a ransom, thus freeing men from condemnation. In this connection the old idea shared by Origen and others that the ransom was paid to Satan is repudiated in strong terms.

In the fourth chapter of the fourth book, where John has most to say about the work of Christ, he declares that Christ

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came to restore the likeness of God, which man had lost by his sin, to free men from corruption and death by granting them communion with himself, to teach them virtue and make virtuous living easier, to redeem them from the tyranny of the devil by giving them a knowledge of God, to break the power of demons and remove the terror of death by implanting the assurance of a resurrection. In chapter nine it is remarked that Christ redeemed man from corruption through his passion, and in chapter thirteen that he took on our nature in order to cleanse us and make us incorruptible, and to give us again a share in his divinity which was lost by the fall. "Through his birth, or incarnation, and his baptism and passion and resurrection, he freed our nature from the sin of our first parent and from death and corruption, and became the first fruits of the resurrection, and made himself a way and image and pattern that we also, following in his footsteps, might become by adoption what he is by nature, sons and heirs of God and joint heirs with him."¹

In these scattered passages there are traces of various traditional notions about Christ's work, but a clear and definite theory is altogether lacking. Irenæus' idea of the transformation of human nature by its union with the divine, an idea that was shared by Athanasius and underlay his insistence upon the real deity of Christ, is suggested but not stated clearly. The notion of Christ's death as a ransom for sin is also referred to, but only in passing, and the same is true of the common belief that his work was that of a teacher and exemplar, revealing God and inciting to virtue. As a matter of fact the orthodox faith of the eastern church of John's time included no definite doctrine of Christ's saving work. The doctrine of his person had so absorbed the attention of theologians as almost completely to crowd out all interest in anything else. The Nicæno-Constantinopoli-

¹ Bk. IV. chap. 13.

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tan Creed says only that the Son of God became incarnate for our salvation and beyond that the eastern church did not go. It is noticeable also that the connection between Christ's person and saving work, which had meant so much to Paul and Irenæus and Athanasius, was altogether lost sight of by John. The deity of Christ as he viewed it did not depend in any way, as it did to them, upon man's need of redemption by deification. Person and work had fallen completely apart and had become independent and unrelated items of the orthodox faith.

Even more striking than the small amount of attention given to the saving work of Christ is the complete absence of any section dealing with salvation itself and the way of salvation. It is clear from passing remarks that John thought of salvation as involving the deification of man or his participation in the nature of Deity,¹ and that he shared the common notion of a future life of eternal blessedness to be enjoyed by the saved. It is clear too that he regarded both faith and works as necessary to salvation, and also the regeneration and the remission of sins to be had in baptism; but all this appears only by the way and in connection with the discussion of other matters. Whether because he was less interested in it or thought it too well understood to need dwelling upon at any rate John had much less to say about soteriology than about Christology.

After finishing his treatment of Christ, to which the whole of the third book and the first eight chapters of the fourth are devoted, John deals in the remainder of his work with a variety of subjects thrown together with little regard for logical sequence. In these chapters he recurs to matters already discussed in earlier parts of the work, as for instance the person and work of Christ, Mary the Mother of God, the freedom of the will, the nature of evil and God's

¹ Cf. *e.g.* Bk. IV. chaps. 9 and 13.

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permission of it. In addition he treats of certain subjects not already touched upon, among them faith, baptism, the eucharist, the worship of saints and images, the Bible, the Sabbath, virginity, Antichrist, and the resurrection. There is little in these chapters that needs mention. Faith, the author says, is of two kinds: the acceptance of the truth taught by the Catholic church and the confident assurance that God will answer our prayers and will fulfill his promises.¹ The latter is a gift of the Spirit, the former is in our own power — an interesting example of the notion current within the church from an early day that belief is a matter of will, and that wrong belief is therefore morally reprehensible. Of the connection of faith with salvation nothing is said.² Indeed, as already remarked, the whole subject of salvation and the way of salvation is passed by without discussion.

In a chapter on the Holy and Immaculate Mysteries of the Lord³ John maintains and defends at some length the theory that the bread and wine in the eucharist are supernaturally changed⁴ into the body and blood of Christ or into the body and blood of God as he also phrases it. They are therefore, he insists, not merely figuratively but in reality the deified body of the Lord. The change of bread and wine is complete so that there are in the eucharist body and blood alone, not in addition to bread and wine. In this matter John followed the common opinion of the eastern church. The change of the elements was clearly taught by Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom, Theodoret and others and was generally taken for granted in John's day.⁵

¹ Bk. IV. chap. 10.

² But in the previous chapter it is said in passing that as faith apart from works is dead, so are works apart from faith (IV. 9).

³ Bk. IV. chap. 13.

⁴ The Greek word is μεταποιέω.

⁵ It is interesting that it does not appear in the Pseudo-Dionysian writings where the symbolism of the elements was emphasized.

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The use of bread and wine in the eucharist John explained as due to man's weakness which makes the unfamiliar and unusual repellent to him. Because of this God has appointed common objects both in baptism and the eucharist in order that by employing things that are natural we may rise to a knowledge of the supernatural. In partaking of the eucharist we not only commune with Christ and share in his divine nature,¹ we commune also with our fellow Christians, becoming one body of Christ and members one of another. We must therefore see to it that we do not commune with heretics, for if we do we become one with them and thus share in their condemnation. Nothing is said about our sharing in the condemnation of the wicked if we partake of the eucharist in company with those whose character and conduct are not what they should be.

While John made a great deal of the eucharist as communion with Christ and participation in his divine nature, the sacrificial idea of it, emphasized among other eastern Fathers by Cyril of Jerusalem and Chrysostom, he referred to only in passing and in the most general terms. This was in harmony with his customary attitude, for his interest was rather in the mystical than in the legal aspect of Christianity.

The perpetual virginity of Mary the Mother of God is asserted in chapter fourteen and in chapter twenty-four virginity is extolled as an ideal for all Christians. Marriage to be sure is not wrong, for it has been approved by God, but celibacy is more honourable, as much more honourable than marriage as angels are higher than men. The lack of a reference to monasticism in this connection is surprising, all the more so because John himself was a monk and because Dionysius had so much to say about it in his Ecclesiastical Hierarchy.

¹ The Greek word is *μεταλαμβάνω*.

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The resurrection of the body is dwelt upon in the closing chapter of the work. If there is to be no resurrection, John says, let us live a life of mere pleasure. Except for the resurrection we differ in no way from the brutes and are even more miserable than they, for their lives are free from sorrow. Unless the dead rise there is neither God nor providence, for the good suffer and the wicked prosper in this life. Divine justice demands that there shall be a resurrection and that the righteous shall be rewarded and the wicked punished everlastingly. Why the punishment should be everlasting John does not say. Very likely he never asked himself the question but simply took the traditional opinion for granted. The fire of hell, he maintains, is not material, but what its nature may be is known to God alone. At this point as at some others he takes refuge in a wholesome agnosticism.

Only less surprising than the omission of a section on salvation and the way of salvation, to which allusion has already been made, was John's failure to include any doctrine of the church. The existence of the Catholic church was taken for granted and the necessity of accepting the orthodox faith as taught by it, but nothing is said about the nature of the church, its origin, its purpose, or its place in the divine plan of salvation. Moreover nothing is said about the various orders of the clergy or the distinction between the clergy and the laity. In fact both ecclesiasticism and sacerdotalism are wholly lacking in John's work. There is lacking also all reference to penance¹ which the western church was making much of. Indeed, as already remarked, the legal side of Christianity, from the beginning so prominent in the west, was evidently of less interest to John than the mystical. To be sure he insisted that good works are

¹ Unless the sixth baptism of repentance and tears mentioned in IV. 9 is to be so interpreted.

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necessary as well as faith and that without obedience there is no salvation,¹ but his emphasis lay rather on union with God and participation in the divine nature, and in this he was typical of the eastern church in general.

The account that has been given of John's Exposition of the Orthodox Faith shows that his treatment of the subject was neither profound nor marked by fresh insights. Especially noticeable is the lack of any controlling principle binding the various doctrines together. The subject of Christology, which he regarded as most important and treated at greatest length, was left quite unrelated to everything else, and the same is true of all the other matters dealt with. Most of the beliefs described might have been accepted without involving the acceptance of any others. Thus the systematic character of the work is wholly external. It is a system of theology only in the sense that it describes and expounds a large number of theological beliefs, not in the sense that they are wrought into a concatenated whole. In the latter sense the eastern church of John's day had no system of theology and his work was therefore truly representative. The lack which we may feel in it was not felt by his contemporaries or by those who came after him. To them, as to him, the orthodox faith embraced a multiplicity of doctrines altogether or largely independent of each other, which were to be accepted because taught by the Scriptures and the Fathers. Their acceptance rested wholly upon authority, though in some cases rational grounds existed and might be urged in their support if it were clearly understood that the real and sufficient ground for believing them was not that they were rational or good but that they had been divinely revealed.

I referred above to another of John's works, the *Sacra parallela*, a large collection of passages from the Bible and

¹ Cf. Bk. III. chap. 1; Bk. IV. chap. 9.

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the Fathers bearing upon ethics. What has been said about the lack of a controlling principle, binding together the several parts of the Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, is true also of the *Sacra parallela*. The ethics of the latter is as atomic as the theology of the former. There is no attempt in either work to relate the various items to each other, to show their mutual dependence, or to trace them to a common root. Equally noticeable is the lack of any connection between ethics and theology. If theology, as set forth by John, appears largely unrelated to religion, it appears equally unrelated to moral conduct, except for the fact that it is God's will we should live virtuously and that he will reward us if we do and punish us if we do not. Authority is the last word in both fields. We believe and we do whatever is required by God. In faith as in conduct not what seems good to us, or true and right in itself, but what has been commanded — this is our duty, to be fulfilled humbly and unquestioningly.

John's Exposition of the Faith (for that matter the *Sacra parallela* as well) reflected the spirit of his day. Everywhere it was felt that the age was barren and unproductive and that all wisdom belonged to the past. In philosophy as in theology the attitude was the same. There was no thought of discovering new truth or attaining new points of view. The most that could be done was to reproduce and expound the opinions of the great thinkers of the past. This task John performed admirably. But to learn from his exposition what Christianity really is, or what it was even to John and his contemporaries, would be very difficult if not impossible. His doctrinal work is not a formulation of the religious experience of Christians or of the truths involved therein, nor is it an account of the religious values which were conserved by Christianity. It has indeed very little to do with religion, and still less with the actual experi-

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ence of religious men. It deals mainly with such matters as the nature of God, the nature of the universe, the nature of man, and the nature of Christ. These fill the greater part of the work and give it its prevailing character. In comparison with what is said of such philosophical and scientific subjects, for they are all philosophical or scientific not religious, the references to religious matters like divine providence, faith, salvation, and union with God, and to Christian ceremonies like baptism and the eucharist, are unimportant and bulk very small.

It may undoubtedly be taken for granted that the Christianity depicted in John's work was not the real Christianity of the eastern church of his day. To be sure the same might be said of much if not most of the theology of the past, which has had as a rule little relation to the religious life of Christians. But the disparity between theology and religion has perhaps never been more clearly seen than in John's work. After all this is not surprising, for the absorption for so many centuries of the leading theologians of the east in speculative Christological questions wholly divorced from the practical religious life made anything else impossible.

The Christians of the east in John's day — and what was true then has been generally true ever since — found their Christianity chiefly in the cultus. Parallel with the doctrinal evolution that has been traced went a development in the matter of worship which touched the people much more nearly. The influence of the Græco-Oriental world was felt as truly in the one as in the other. The ritual of the eastern church with its sacraments and other sacred rites, its elaborate ceremonial, its worship of Mary and the saints, its veneration of relics and the like, was as syncretistic as its theology. There entered into it age-old superstitions and practices which long antedated Christianity itself and which serve to bind the Christian east, not of the Middle Ages

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alone but of modern times as well, with the pagan east of a remote antiquity.

Moreover, as in the ethnic religions ritual practices meant more than theology to the masses of the people so it was in the Christian church. It is not the place in a history of Christian thought to deal with the cultus in detail or to trace its development; only the underlying principles concern us here. These principles, in the eastern church at least — and it is with that church alone that we have to do at present — were largely identical with those that underlay the pagan mysteries. Through the cultus Christians come into union with God. Participating in the sacraments of the church and sharing in its worship they enjoy communion with him and become partakers of his divinity and heirs of immortality. The worship of the church is made up of a series of sacred and symbolic acts, looking upon which men are lifted above themselves and brought into the presence of the divine. More and more as time passed this seemed to the mass of Christians the whole of Christianity, and more and more to the theologians themselves if not the whole of Christianity at least the major part of it.

Because the cultus included the recitation or the chanting of the creed the latter also had its part in the deification of the Christian; it too was a sacred symbol by means of which union between the Christian and his God is promoted. Dogma gradually lost all independent significance and was regarded as essential only because embodied in the worship of the church. Not as the formulation of truth but as a holy mystery it was of value. To understand it therefore was not important but to preserve it intact. It was this conception of the place of dogma that came to expression in the notorious controversy over the *filioque*.¹ To keep

¹ In the so-called Nicæno-Constantinopolitan Creed the Holy Spirit is spoken of as "proceeding from the Father." Augustine, the great Latin

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the ancient symbol verbally unchanged was a paramount religious duty.

In this chapter on John of Damascus I have allowed myself to give a more detailed account of his Exposition of the Orthodox Faith than the interest of the work itself might seem to warrant. My justification is its genuinely representative character and the degree to which it dominated for centuries the theological thinking of the eastern church. In studying it we have in effect been studying the theology of that church as it prevailed throughout the Middle Ages. The divorce between theology and religion, the lack of a controlling principle binding the various items of the orthodox faith into a consistent whole, the scholasticism that marks the treatment—all these are characteristic not simply of John's work, but of the writings of those that came after him. His influence was very great. Few questions were raised by his successors that he had not already discussed, and, if not always at any rate usually, their solutions and his agreed. His position in the east was not unlike that of Thomas Aquinas in the west, though he had fewer rivals and enjoyed a more undivided allegiance. Nor was his influence confined to the east. His Exposition of the Orthodox Faith was translated into Latin in the twelfth century and was highly regarded by theologians of the west, particularly by Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas who made large use of it.

With John our account of Christian thought in the eastern church may fairly be brought to a close. There were theologians after him. Indeed throughout the Middle Ages the

theologian, in his desire to emphasize the equality of Father and Son, taught that the Spirit proceeds from both of them, and later the word *filiusque* ("and from the Son") was inserted in the western text of the Creed. This addition was made by the easterners one of the grounds for the break with the western church.

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greater part of Byzantine literature was theological or religious. But there was no creative thinking and it is not important to follow the subject further here. The Byzantine east was not intellectually stagnant during the Middle Ages as is often said. As a matter of fact until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the level of culture was higher there than in the west. But the deference to the past was so great and its authority so complete that little independent thinking was done in any lines, least of all in theology. Some centuries after John's time the Greek church took over from the Roman the latter's doctrine of the sacraments, and in certain other matters the influence of the west was felt to some degree. But all this was of minor importance. The development of Christian thought in the east was already virtually complete when John produced his summary of the orthodox faith.

On the other hand, in the west the development still went on and has not even yet come to an end. In part it paralleled that of the east; many of the questions asked and answered were duplicates, if not echoes, of those discussed by eastern theologians. In still greater part the west expended its efforts in other directions. Its religious leaders faced a frontier of civilization. They inherited a political and cultural empire. They had to deal with a wholly new set of problems arising from the fact that individuals were jolted loose from their ancestral securities as they were not in the east, and needed moral reinforcing and stabilizing. For a time, not long after the conclusion of the productive era of eastern thought, western thinking also appeared doomed to stagnation. But appearances were deceptive, and under the surface its vitality remained unimpaired. Quickened by unfamiliar and challenging situations, and fertilized, among other things, by fresh contacts with Greek philosophy, it flowered anew in the creative work of the leading schoolmen

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and seemed vigorous and commanding enough to bend the forces of the modern age to its service. Then came the Protestant Reformation and the beginning of changes that are still going on. All this lies beyond the horizon of the present volume and will have to be treated later. But though more intimately connected with our contemporary religion and culture, it cannot be understood without the development that has been already traced. For our modern Christianity, whether Catholic or Protestant, is the heir of both east and west.

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Origen's works are to be found in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, vols. 11-17. Lommatzsch's edition in 25 small volumes (1831 ff.), is still useful. A new critical edition is in course of publication in *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (1899 ff.). I have used this edition so far as published. English translation of the *De principiis*, the *Contra Celsum*, and certain other works in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vols. IV and IX.

E. R. Redepenning: *Origines*, 2 vols., 1841, 1846.

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E. de Faye: *Origène: sa vie, son œuvre, sa pensée*, 3 vols., 1923-28.

The most important work on Origen.

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Important. Contains an admirable bibliographical Introduction.

There is an admirable article on Origen by B. F. Westcott in Smith and Wace's *Dictionary of Christian Biography*.

CHAPTER XII

Our sources for a knowledge of the Monarchians are scattered and fragmentary. For Noetus and other early Modalists the chief are Tertullian's *Adversus Praxean*, Hippolytus' *Contra Noetum*, *Philosophumena*, and *Syntagma adversus omnes haereses*. The *Syntagma* is lost but can be reconstructed in considerable part from Epiphanius' *Panarion*, Philastrius' *Diversarum haereseon liber*, and Pseudo-Tertullian's *Adversus omnes haereses*. For Sabellius the principal sources are Hippolytus' *Philosophumena*, Novatian's *De trinitate*, Epiphanius' *Panarion*, and many references in the writings of Athanasius; for Theodotus and other Roman Adoptionists Hippolytus' *Philosophumena* and the fragments of *The Little Labyrinth* in Eusebius' *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Bk. V, chap. 28; for Paul of Samosata, Eusebius' *H. E.*, VII, 27-30; Epiphanius' *Panarion*; fragments of the Acts of the Antiochian Synod of 268; fragments of a lost work by Paul himself (*πρὸς Σαβίτων λόγοι*, preserved in a seventh century *Doctrina patrum de verbis incarnatione*); and scattered references in Athanasius and other Fathers. The extant fragments of Paul are given by Bardy and Loofs (in the books named below) and also by H. J. Lawlor in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1917 and 1918. For a complete conspectus of the sources, see Harnack's *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur*, s. v.

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An old book but still valuable, particularly for its account of the Roman Monarchians.

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Contains an elaborate bibliography.

F. Loofs: *Paulus von Samosata*, 1924 (*Texte und Untersuchungen*, vol. XLIV).

The relevant sections in the histories of doctrine should also be consulted (particularly Harnack, Loofs and Seeberg); also a long and important article "Monarchianismus" by Harnack in Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, 3rd ed.

CHAPTERS XIII AND XIV

Of the writings of Lucian and Arius only brief fragments have survived. An account of them is given in Harnack's *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur*, vol. I, pp. 526 ff. Athanasius' works are in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, vols. 25-28. Handy edition of his historical writings and his *Orations against the Arians*, edited by W. Bright, 1881. English translation of the most important of his works, edited by A. Robertson, with an admirable introduction on Athanasius and the Arian controversy, in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, vol. IV.

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- H. Sträter: *Die Erlösungslehre des hl. Athanasius*, 1894.
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See also the Histories of Doctrine, particularly Harnack's and Seeberg's; Loofs' article "Arianismus" in Herzog's *Realencyklopädie*, 3rd ed.; F. J. Foakes-Jackson's article "Arianism" in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*; and for the history of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the ancient church, F. Nitzsch's *Dogmengeschichte*, I, pp. 288 ff.

CHAPTER XV

The extant fragments of Apollinarius' writings are given by J. Draeseke: *Apollinarios von Laodicea*, 1892 (*Texte und Untersuchungen*, vol. VII); and better by H. Lietzmann: *Apollinaris von Laodicea und seine Schule*, 1904.

The latter is indispensable for a knowledge of Apollinarius' teaching.

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CHAPTER XVI

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